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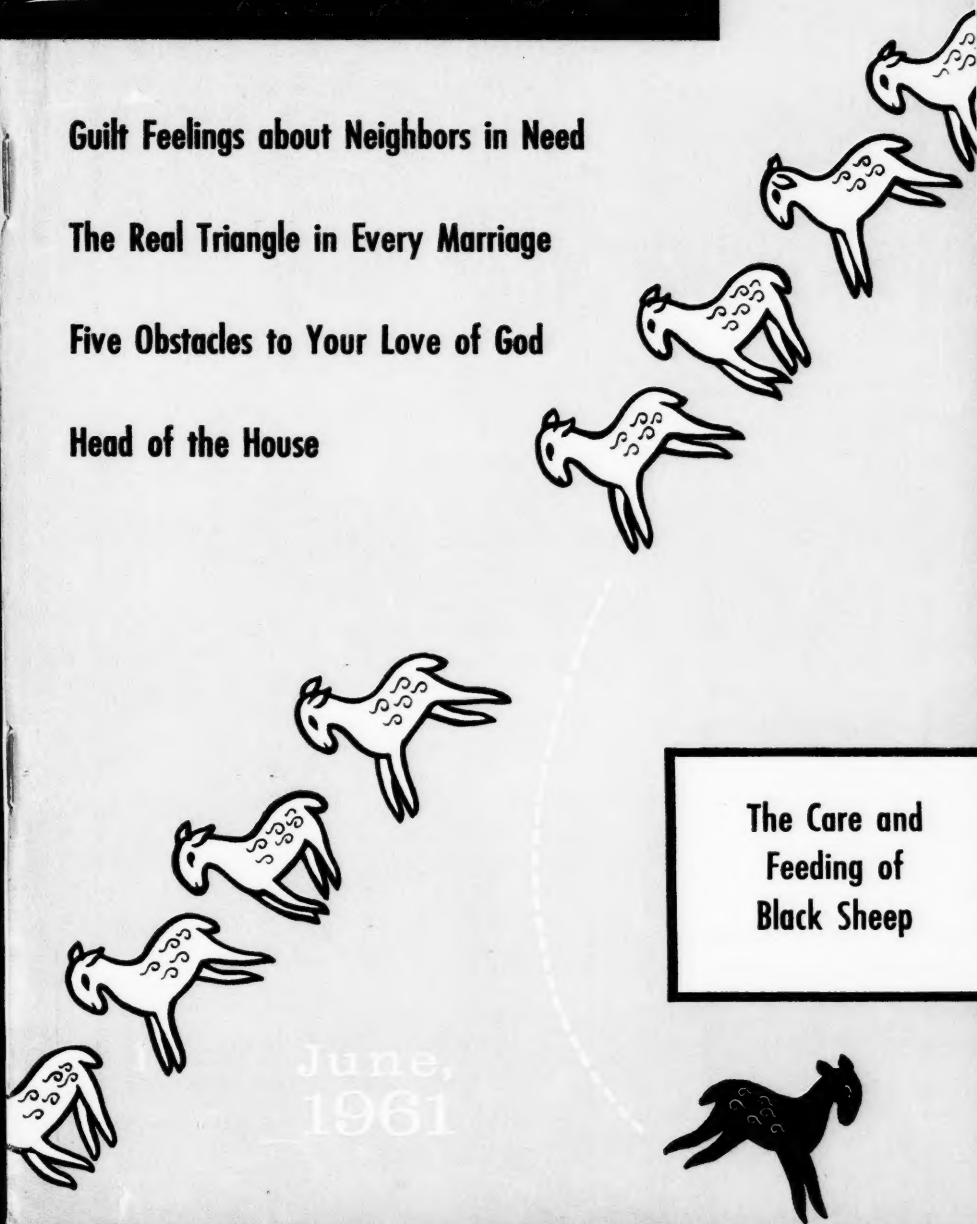
The Real Triangle in Every Marriage

Five Obstacles to Your Love of God

Head of the House

**The Care and
Feeding of
Black Sheep**

June,
1961





THE Liguorian

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Unchangeable Principles
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Brings Happiness to
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•

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THE LIGUORIAN

LIGUORI, MO.

BERNARD F. MCWILLIAMS, C.S.S.R.

BLESSED is the family that does not have its black sheep! Innumerable and also blessed (as we shall see) are the families that *do* have black sheep. It is true that the Holy Family faced every one of life's problems — except this one. But let it be noted that into Christ's *apostolic* family one black sheep brought deep sadness and gloom. Treason followed by the stark tragedy of suicide — what heavier blow could come to a family? To parents stunned by sim-

ilar blows and asking, "Why has this happened to us?" we say regretfully but truthfully, "It happens in the best of families." But why it happens is anyone's guess. Herewith are some of the more educated guesses.

1. *A black sheep in the family is the product of parental mistakes.*

Whether this is true or not, the fact is that parents do make mistakes. They might give the child too much love or not enough; they might be too strict or too indulgent, overcorrective (nagging) or undercorrective (letting the child get away with murder); too protective or not protective enough; too preachy (talking religion too much) or not preachy enough (never talking to the child about God); not demanding enough or demanding too much (setting too high a goal of perfection for the child). Worst of all, they might set an appallingly bad example for the child. Whatever form their mistake would take, it is, we say, perfectly

THE CARE

AND

FEEDING OF

BLACK SHEEP

What attitude should a family take toward one of its members who has gone astray?

possible that the parents could be responsible for their problem child.

2. *There is always the possibility that the child is not vicious but simply feeble-minded.*

Unquestionably, many young people from good families are in jail merely because the courts have no way of knowing for certain that they are really mental patients. In many instances the son who becomes a dope addict, alcoholic, rapist, thief or even murderer is, because of mental illness, innocent of any serious wrong. There may come a time when psychiatrists can tell us with absolute certainty when a delinquent boy is or is not the victim of mental illness. But for the time being, only God knows. Therefore we should never base our judgment of another on what we see or hear. We could be terribly mistaken. *Judge not that you be not judged.*

3. *Environment certainly can be a factor contributing to the waywardness of a boy or girl.*

But we honestly think that this factor has been highly overrated. It is possible that a boy will turn bad merely because he lives in a slum area. But because the majority of persons come through a childhood in the slums morally unscathed, we must normally look elsewhere for the cause of delinquency. We don't say for a moment that slum areas should remain. Every effort, individual and collective, should be made to give every family a healthy environment in which to raise children. But let us not be so naive as to believe that

slum clearance will mean crime clearance.

4. *Another guess would be that a person's education could be responsible for his conversion into a black sheep.*

Certainly more than one youth has started a career of debauchery because he has "learned" from agnostic professors in state universities that there is no God and therefore no law to restrict him. But when a young man comes forth from such a university with no moral scruples and no faith, who can say whether the blame rests entirely with his professor or, to some extent, with his parents?

5. *Or with himself?*

Barring mental illness, the plain matter of fact is that a black sheep is a black sheep frequently because he wants to be a black sheep. Although we should never say of an *individual* that he is bad (judge not!) yet we cannot write off the clear Scriptural implication that there are bad people in the world, that is, people who know the difference between right and wrong and who deliberately choose, without being pressed by king-sized compulsions, to be bad.

This is an important point to remember when parents are faced with the problem of the black sheep. After all the factors that contribute to bad behavior are accounted for, there remains the fact that truly bad behavior (mortal sin) is the product of the individual's own free choice. If sons and daughters are bad for some other reason, then they are not

truly bad. Therefore parents should not punish themselves for the mistakes they may have made in rearing their children. They should deeply *regret* any deliberate negligence. But let no son say that he was doomed to badness because of bad parents. We say this not to encourage parental negligence but to discourage the profitless repeating of the agonizing question, "What did we do wrong?"

What should be the attitude of parents toward a wayward son or daughter? Kindness and love above everything else. It is pointless, fruitless and self-defeating to adopt a harsh attitude toward the black sheep. Furthermore, it is unchristian. What is to be gained by telling a thieving son never to darken the doorstep again? What hope is there of getting a daughter to return to Christian practices when she is treated with unchristian harshness? Whence stems the anger and bitterness that parents display toward a wayward son except from injured pride? A sinful person is simply one who has turned his back on love; he must be met with love if he is to get a glimpse of his pitiable condition. Therefore parents ought to realize that rejection of a wayward son will only breed in him fiercer rebellion.

On no account, however, should parental kindness be of such a nature as to imply approval of bad behavior. On the contrary, parents should make every effort to bring home to the offender firmly and unmistakably their complete disapproval. As an example of what we mean,

let us cite the question of an invalidly married son. He and his "wife" are living in a state either of adultery or fornication; therefore, while every kindness should be shown them, nevertheless they are not to be invited to sleep under the parental roof. (In some cases, this rigid stand might not seem advisable, and a priest might be consulted in order to make the right decision.) Needless to say, when sons and daughters are getting married "out of the Church" no one in the family should attend any function at all connected with the wedding. This would include showers and receptions. But an attempt should be made to explain to the couple involved that such action is being taken not out of spite or revenge but simply as a firm and clear way of registering disapproval.

FINALLY, in the place of fruitless moaning over the waywardness of a son or daughter, parents would do well to substitute fervent, constant and confident prayer for the black sheep. Sermonizing them, reprimanding them, reasoning with them, pleading tearfully with them — these methods might, and sometimes do, bring about a conversion. But when all else fails, there is always prayer — not as a desperate, last-stand measure but as an *almost* infallible way of bringing back the strays.

All the prayer in the world cannot change the heart of one who is determined to go on being bad. But, strangely enough, prayer almost always does help, provided it is fervent, daily and, above all, confident.

What happens is that the one being prayed for is offered, day in and day out, grace sufficient to turn back to God. Our prayer, therefore, should be daily so that on the day the black sheep would want to give up his evil ways, the grace will be there for him to make the step. When that day arrives, there will be more rejoicing in that family over the one sheep returned than over the ten or more who never strayed.

Yes, there is a bright side to the tragedy of the black sheep. Almost always this tragedy brings a family to pray as it never prayed before; it binds the family together with bonds of love far stronger than existed be-

fore; it makes parents wiser, more loving, more conscientious in rearing the children that remain. And whether the black sheep be a drinking uncle, an agnostic nephew, a fallen-away brother or a criminal cousin, there is always the strong possibility that the black sheep is merely the victim of emotional instability and therefore not as bad as he seems to be.

To the black sheep who (we pray) might be reading this we say, "Put an end to the heartache you are causing those who love you. Make a new beginning. Come home to the house of your Father."

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READERS



ASK

Ex-Catholics and Salvation

Louis G. Miller, C.S.S.R.

QUESTION: *Recently in the LIGUORIAN you stated that respect for the individual conscience is basic in Catholic teaching. I have a friend who married outside the faith, and has joined another church. She says she no longer believes in the Catholic religion. Can she save her soul?*

ANSWER: As to how the soul of any individual will appear under the scrutiny of the divine Judge, this must remain a secret with God, until the time of the last judgment, when all things will be revealed. Certainly it would be most rash to say of any person, even the most wicked sinner on earth: "His fate is sealed; his soul is marked out for hell." God's mercy is infinite, and He is always looking for ways and means to draw men to Himself in the bonds of truth. Moreover, God Himself respects the individual conscience. He will not force a man's conscience. He does not hold as guilty the man who, doing wrong, nevertheless holds sincerely in his own conscience that he is doing right.

All this being true, one must nevertheless feel uneasy about those who fall away from the true faith. It is difficult to see how one who has studied the faith, accepted its tenets, and lived according to its norms, can convince himself as it were overnight that the one true faith is no longer true. In so many

cases, as in the one described above, reasons of the heart enter the picture. One must inevitably ask the question as to how sincere a person really is who allows such reasons to displace the conviction as to the truth which formerly filled his mind.

Possession of the true faith is a gift of God, and it is a gift which can be lost. Various factors can cause its loss. Failure to practice the faith in daily life can weaken it until it dies of undernourishment. Pride and stubborn refusal to accept legitimate authority can destroy its foundations. Misguided romance can obscure the reasoning process and even make the faith seem unimportant as compared with possession of the loved one. How many of these excuses for leaving the faith will seem valid as the soul stands in the naked light of truth before Christ the Judge?

No doubt the Judge will not be severe with those who never really knew the faith, or loved it, even though they had the name of Catholic. Parents and others may be held responsible for such as these, if they were derelict in their duty. But what of those who really knew the faith, loved it, gave it their full devotion, and then turned aside from it through spite or for some lesser human good?

Certainly such as these are deserving of our pity and our prayers.

EVERY Christian has often heard the words of our Lord to one of the Scribes who asked Him which is the first and greatest commandment of all. This was His answer: "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with thy whole heart and with thy whole soul and with thy whole mind and with thy whole strength. This is the first commandment." (Mark, 12:30)

This is not only the first commandment, but it is the one on which the fulfillment of all other commandments depends. So true is this that accordingly as one loves God he will be a saint or a sinner, a mediocre or a fervent Christian, a truly loyal or frequently disloyal follower of Jesus Christ.

Because there are mediocre and disloyal and sinful Christians in the world, it is worthwhile to analyze what factors in human life most frequently interfere with the complete love that every human being owes to God.

Experience proves that there are five such factors. All of them may be

reduced to some degree of surrender to the weakness inherited by fallen human nature and failure to use the compensating graces merited for all by Jesus Christ. Yet a careful study of these five factors will reveal the exact point or points at which one fails in something that is necessary for a true love of God.

In short, in this article will be found the answers to such questions

FIVE

OBSTACLES

TO YOUR

LOVE

OF GOD

DONALD F. MILLER, C.S.S.R.

Perhaps you are among
those who do not love God
as He deserves to be loved.

If so, one of the five
obstacles to loving God
listed and explained below
stands in your way.

Examine yourself carefully
as you read.

as the following, which all men and women of good will should ask of themselves: "Why am I a sinner? Why am I a mediocre Christian? Why am I making no noticeable progress toward holiness and perfection?"

Obstacle 1: Lack of a basic personal conviction about God

Principle: *If you do not love God with your whole heart and soul, it may be because you have not yet arrived at an absolute, unshakable, personal conviction that God is the supreme good, the only good, the all good, both in Himself and for you.*

This is the foundation of all true love of God: a decision of the mind that we need God, while, having Him, we need nothing else; that in possessing God by love we possess all that is good; that to lose God is to lose everything that is good in itself and good for us.

There will never be a total and perfect love of God in anyone who retains doubts about whether God is the all good and the only good; who lets himself dispute this point; who changes his mind about it in varying circumstances.

This total and enduring conviction that God is the all good and the only good can be seen to have been the key to the making of every saint. Take the most dramatic examples of sanctity — the martyrs. An executioner said to them: "You may have your life or you may have your God; you cannot have both. Choose between the two." The martyrs did not hesitate. Not even life itself was looked upon as good in comparison with God. So they gladly told the execu-

tioner to take their lives but to leave them God.

On the negative side it can be seen with equal clarity that every human being who falls short of loving God completely, who offends Him habitually, or even occasionally, has not built into his mind the unshakable conviction that God is the all good and the only good for him. The variety of attitudes that fall short of this total conviction is vast.

The self-styled atheist and agnostic usually give as a reason for saying that there is no God, or that they cannot and need not know God, the fact that there is suffering in the world. This to them proves either that there is no God, or if there is a God, that He is not good and just and kind, or simply that He does not care what happens to His creatures or actually exercises cruelty toward them. Their logic is atrocious, but it provides them with a motive for ignoring God.

Men and women who believe in God but who live in habitual violation of God's laws do so only because they have not made up their minds that God is infinitely more worth loving and possessing than the fragmentary and momentary bits of satisfaction they get from their sins. Certainly they do not possess the conviction that to lose God by sin is the very essence of hell.

Even those who are not open rebels against God, but who serve Him very imperfectly, who commit many minor violations of God's laws, are not yet convinced that the least word of God, such as that one must for-

give enemies, must not judge or gossip about others, must be patient in trials, etc., means more to their happiness than giving in to their selfish imperfections.

One who wants to love God, therefore, must take up serious meditation on all the truths of reason and faith that result in the steadfast conviction that God is the all good and the only good. God's creating him out of nothing, God's giving him a nature that has a limitless capacity for happiness, God's incarnation in Christ, His teaching about heaven and hell, His suffering and death on the cross for sinful man — all these become proofs in his mind that God alone is worth loving, that nothing must be loved that cannot be loved in God.

This, then, becomes a remembered conviction: remembered in every happy and sad moment, in every trial and temptation, in every serious choice that ever has to be made.

Obstacle 2: A wrong notion of love

Principle: *If you don't love God as He should be loved, it may be because you have a wrong notion of what true love means.*

The most common wrong notion about love, especially about loving God, is that feelings of powerful attraction are in some way essential to love. This results in two fatal mistakes that are made by many: 1) if strong feelings of attraction for God do not accompany their efforts to love Him, then they no longer hold to the conviction that God is the all good and the only good; 2) if strong feelings of attraction for something other than God or contrary to God's

will arise in their nature, then the feelings dictate what must be preferred.

To be enabled to see through these deceits, a person must know something about the essence of real love and something about the nature of feelings of attraction.

Love resides preeminently in the free human will, which is a spiritual faculty of man. Essentially, love means choice. In regard to God, it means choosing God rather than anything less than God or contrary to God; willing to please God rather than to please anyone who competes with God for one's favor; doing what God commands, willing what God wills, fulfilling God's every word spoken to man.

Because we do not see God as He is in this life, our feelings are not apt to be awakened to a strong emotional attraction for Him. Our love has two things to go on: first, we know by reason and faith that He is the all good and the only good; second, the expressed will of God is the important thing for our wills to embrace. Thus it is said that the will of God is God; there is no love of God without obeying, embracing, surrendering to His will, no matter what the state of one's feelings or emotions at any given time.

On the other hand human feelings or emotions or passions are blind and automatic reactions of bodily appetites to the perceived presence of something that offers the prospect of a momentary or briefly enduring pleasure or a passing pain. Bodily

feelings are incapable of making a judgment about right or wrong. They react blindly to what pleases or pains, with desire for what pleases, with revulsion for what pains. They can evoke a desire for some pleasure that the mind recognizes to be clearly contrary to God's will; they can suggest a cowardly escape from some pain that God clearly wills that a person endure.

No one can love God without learning to judge with his mind and to dominate with his will (always aided by God's grace) the feelings of attraction and revulsion that arise within him. It is right here that many people bring to a tragic end their love of God.

The feeling of a married and divorced man for a certain woman whom he cannot validly, that is, with God's sanction, marry, may be much more violent than his bodily feelings toward God as his only good. The feelings of a man toward taking revenge on someone who has wronged him may be much stronger than his feeling of attraction for God's command that he forgive his enemy.

If either man, or any man or woman in any temptation arising out of feelings, has not learned to subject his feelings to the cool light of reason and faith, and to the decision-making power of the will, he will abandon God and take the pleasure that his feelings crave. Right there his love of God ends. He gets the pleasures of a bad marriage, or the satisfaction of revenge, or the cheap rewards that any sin brings, but he

loses God and he loses Him forever if his wrong choice remains steadfast till death.

This does not mean that all feelings suggest the embracing of pleasures that bring to an end one's love of God. God has made lawful and virtuous many bodily pleasures for which there are in human beings strong feelings of attraction: the pleasures of eating and drinking in moderation, of lawful marriage, of a thousand forms of innocent recreation.

Furthermore, one's feelings can be trained to encourage and support one's love of God and His will. This is accomplished through pondering the emotional aspects of the babyhood of Christ, the scenes in His public life, the harrowing incidents in His passion, and the stimulating example of His saints.

Obstacle 3: Forgetting God in the pursuit of lesser goods of this world

Principle: *If you don't love God as He deserves to be loved, it may be because you are so engrossed in getting every satisfaction out of this passing world that you rarely advert to your need of Him.*

It is possible for human beings, when actually pushed to it in an argument or discussion, to admit the clear truth that God is the all good and the only good for them; then, when the discussion is over to go out into the world and act as though their only good was to be found in the satisfactions that this world can provide.

This is the obstacle to the love of God figuratively described so clearly by our Lord in the parable of the sower and the seed. The seed is the word of God, that is, the truth of the importance of loving God, is planted in the hearts of many; but before it can bring forth fruit it is "choked by the cares and riches of this world."

In modern times this same obstacle has come to be called "secularism," which is the spiritual disease that induces a person to live as if worldly advancement, comfort, luxuries, pleasures, riches were far more important goals than loving God, advancing in virtue, making certain of winning heaven and escaping hell. Actually it is only another facet of obstacle No. 1 described above, namely, that a person has no abiding conviction that God is the all good, the only good, the one good for which he was made.

It is difficult to surmount the obstacle of secularism or of considering this world's goods more important than God, when one lives in a society and atmosphere in which the majority of people worship this world's good things as a primary goal. The difficulty is enlarged in a country like America, where large numbers of people not only worship material prosperity but have attained to higher standards of such prosperity than similar numbers of any given society in the history of the world.

In such an environment vigorous thought and action are needed by individuals lest God become to them shadowy, unreal, something less than

the only and all good, and most of the time forgotten or ignored. All this is what God has become even to certain types of Catholics who are fairly loyal to the external practices of their religion.

Among these is the man or woman who is so busy making and using money, keeping up with the Joneses, climbing the social ladder, attending parties and society affairs, that the thought of God as having any personal relationship to them rarely crosses their mind. This is the great danger for the rich: the thought of God is choked out of their minds by the activities made possible by their wealth.

Among these also are those who, not having as much prosperity as their neighbors, choke God out of their thinking by giving way to ceaseless complaints, envious grumbings, moody resentment against their miserable lot. Their lives are full of sadness because they think that material prosperity and pleasure are their all good and only good, and are being denied to them.

Obstacle 4: Resentment against those in authority, whom God has chosen to make known His will

Principle: If you do not love God completely, it may be because you hate to surrender to the obligation of obeying imperfect human superiors.

It has been made clear that loving God means embracing God's will, obeying God's commands however and whenever they are made known. God manifests His will, and thus of-

fers opportunities for love, in many ways: through His ten commandments, through the moral and spiritual instructions He gave when He appeared on earth, through the Church He founded to teach in His name, through the pope and the bishops and the pastors who are lawfully constituted and authorized spokesmen for the Church.

Some people stop loving God, or diminish their love, because they cannot stand to be told what God wills them to do or not to do through human representatives. Their minds become so preoccupied with indignation at the real or imagined imperfections of those who hold spiritual authority in the Church that the essential thing, God's will for them, is despised or rejected.

How often the correspondence of a priest who engages in writing about moral and spiritual matters turns up bitter reactions like this: "You priests have your nerve to tell us married people that birth prevention is sinful. You live in nice rectories; you ride in new cars; you have plenty to eat and drink; you have no worries or cares. You are always after money, but you won't pay for the children you tell us we must have; you won't take over our debts, etc., etc. We certainly are not going to listen to you."

Note how in all such reactions to statements of doctrine and law, the essential question is sidetracked. That question is: What does God want me to do? Has He made a law on this matter? Is He expressing His will, on which my eternal happiness

depends, through a spokesman of His Church? Is this a point on which I must choose to love or hate God?

Not only is the essential question sidetracked, but the questions raised have already been answered. If a priest lives in sin, or is not detached from worldly things, or neglects much of his duty, or does not love God above all things, God will take care of *him*. Not to love God with all one's heart because one knows a priest or several priests who seem not to love God with their whole heart is a foolish and disastrous motive for action.

Obstacle 5: Failure to pray for the grace to love God

Principle: *If you do not love God as the all good and only good in Himself and for you, it may be because you are neglecting to ask God often enough for the gift of such love.*

Human motivation can go only so far in inspiring the practice of any virtue. Even after the most cogent motives possible have been fanned into a flame of desire to practice the love of God, the grace of God is needed to set the desire into action. And the grace of God has been promised to man only in response to his prayers.

Prayer is used here in a wide sense as including not only private vocal and mental prayer, but attendance at Mass and the use of the sacraments given by Christ as channels of grace and of power. Only through these means can the love of God come into effective being and remain alive and grow in intensity in any soul.

If any reader of this study has learned to recognize in one of its

points some obstacle to his loving God totally, let him know that the first step he must take toward removing that obstacle is adopting habits of more frequent prayer and reception of the sacraments.

Thus he will win the unshakable conviction that God is his only good.

Thus he will be cleansed of wrong notions about love.

Thus he will learn the vanity of this world's prosperity.

Thus he will merit the victory of surrender to lawful authority which represents the will of God Whom we must love to be saved.

LOOK AGAIN AND AGAIN!

You would like to know God? Look at the crucifix.

You would like to love God? Look at the crucifix.

You want to be happy with Him forever and forever? Look at the crucifix.

You wonder what God is and what He is like? Look at the crucifix.

You wonder what you are and what you are worth? Look at the crucifix.

You wonder how merciful God is? Look at the crucifix.

You wonder how much He wants you in heaven? Look at the crucifix.

You wonder how much He will help you to get there? Look at the crucifix.

J. J. Marquardt — Glenmary Missioner

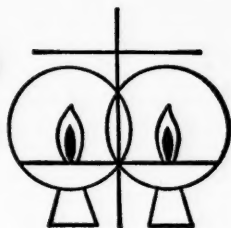
HIS SON'S MERITS

Gloom is no Christian temper; that repentance is not real which has not love in it; that self-chastisement is not acceptable which is not sweetened by faith and cheerfulness. We must live in sunshine, even when we sorrow; we must live in God's presence, we must not shut ourselves up in our own hearts, even when we are reckoning up our past sins. . . . We must look abroad into this fair world, which God made "very good," while we mourn over the evil which Adam brought into it. We must hold communion with what we see there while we seek Him who is invisible; we must admire it while we abstain from it; acknowledge God's love while we deprecate His wrath; confess that, many as are our sins, His grace is greater.

Lord, our sins are more in number than the hairs of our head; yet even the hairs of our head are all numbered by You. You count our sins, and, as You count, so can You forgive; for that reckoning, great though it be, comes to an end; but Your mercies fail not, and Your Son's merits are infinite.

Cardinal Newman—Heart to Heart

FOR WIVES AND HUSBANDS ONLY



Doctor vs. God

PROBLEM: In the October issue of your magazine, you dealt with the topic of the Bible and contraception. I too have that problem. I told my doctor that our religion is against contraception. He firmly replied: "How can I continue to treat you if you get pregnant?" He went on to explain how important it was for me to be in good health and therefore to have healthy babies. I believed him because he is a good M. D. Today I am well and hope to have my fifth child soon. I really don't feel guilty about practicing contraception. It would be bad only if it were habit-forming like a drug. I am a happier and healthier person because I followed my doctor's orders. Print this if you like.

ANSWER: Sometimes doctors, like priests, are misquoted when they advise their patients to build up their health before they have another child. They mean that the patient should use moral means to avoid pregnancy, such as rhythm or abstinence from the privileges of marriage for a time. The patient reads into this an order that he (or she) practice contraception in one form or another, and then quotes the doctor as approving or urging something that he did not prescribe at all.

If a doctor specifically urges the use of contraceptives, and even gives a

Donald F. Miller, C.S.S.R.

veiled threat that he will refuse to take care of the person involved unless this urging is heeded, then a Catholic has no other course than to give up this doctor before there is any need for his giving up the patient. No matter how ignorant or well-intentioned the doctor may be, by prescribing contraceptive practices he is asking a Catholic to violate his conscience and to jeopardize his immortal soul. The informed Catholic knows this, and knows that in moral matters he must obey God rather than man, no matter how learned and skilled in scientific matters the latter may be.

It does not require a doctor to tell a mother who has a few children and who is somewhat run down that there are benefits to be obtained from practicing contraception. All sins, including adultery and abortion and stealing, have an appeal by reason of the simple fact that they offer certain temporary benefits to the one who commits them. If there were no such temporary benefits accruing from sin, nobody would ever be tempted to commit a sin.

Such temporary benefits of sin must always be measured against the eternal damage that sin does to one's soul. Indeed it is only through strong convic-

tions of the primary purposes of life (the salvation of one's soul) and by frequent meditation on the last things (death, judgment, heaven and hell) that anyone can build up strong resistance to temptations to any kind of sin. Jesus Christ told all His followers that for the sake of their salvation they must be willing to give up every conceivable material good, and suffer any loss, even to the laying down of their lives.

Thus we have before us a woman who maintains that she has gained bet-

ter health and a rosier outlook for her future on earth by committing habitual mortal sins. She says she has no regrets, proving that repeated sins can dull the conscience and make one unmindful of the true purpose of life. If there is no God, and no crucified Saviour Who will meet her and judge her at death, she has done well. If there is a God, Who became Man and died for His people to inspire them to suffer when necessary for Him and for their souls, then she may regret for all eternity the good things she purchased at the price of sin.

ADVICE TO SURGEONS

Let those among you who are Christians never forget to see in their patient a likeness of Jesus suffering! Let them also constantly keep before their eyes Jesus our Saviour, as their divine model; and let them be fired with the desire to follow, faithfully and humbly, in the footsteps of Him who walked the earth "doing good and healing all." (Acts 10:38). Not only did Jesus perform miraculous deeds and relieve all forms of misery, but He also was respectful of the personal dignity of the recipients of His favors: He never healed anyone unless the person concerned manifested a desire to be healed, at least implicitly.

Therefore, gentlemen, practice your noble profession with these lofty intentions, and you will then be justified in hoping to hear the Lord welcome you with the sweet words promised to us in St. Matthew's Gospel: "Come blessed of my Father . . . I was . . . sick and you visited me." (Matt. 25:34-36). Such words are meant for those who practice the works of mercy; they are the expression of Jesus Christ's gratitude for the care He Himself receives in the person of one of His human brothers. May we too serve our brothers with all the wisdom, courage and love of which we are capable, so that this longed for call to perfect bliss may be addressed to us on the day chosen by divine providence!

Pope John XXIII in The Pope Speaks

BENEFIT OF TEMPTATION

As long as we live in this world, we cannot be without tribulation and temptation. Nevertheless, temptations are often very profitable to a man, troublesome and grievous though they may be; for in them a man is humbled, purified and instructed.

Imitation

Excerpts from letters received from our readers in answer to the statement made by a discontented mother that the Catholic Church's stand on birth control is stupid.

For

Whom the

Church

Is Not

"Stupid"

IN the *For Wives and Husbands* Only of the February LIGUORIAN we published a letter from a discontented mother in which, among other things, she made the following statements: "The Catholic Church's stand on birth control is stupid." "Nine out of ten Catholic married couples practice contraception, no matter what the Church says." "Mothers of large families are always sickly; their children ill-clothed and underfed." "Priests and nuns have no right to speak on this subject because of their nice and modern rectories and convents."

Seldom has any one letter inspired so vast and agitated a response from other readers. Letters came to us from practically every state in the union, and not one single letter ex-

pressed approval of the rebellious ideas that appeared in the original letter.

Taken as a whole, these letters provide such a heartwarming tribute to the loyalty of Catholics to their faith and its teachings, that we here reproduce excerpts from a fairly large sampling of the total. They should also give pause to anyone who is taking comfort in sin from the erroneous thought that "almost everybody is doing it."

From Long Island:

The letter of the woman who called the Catholic Church "stupid" for her stand on birth prevention was an insult to me and many mothers. I have had eight children and never a sick day in my life, not even during pregnancy. All my children are well dressed, though I see nothing wrong with hand-me-downs, and they have plenty of milk and fruit. I would never want to say goodbye to my husband when he went off to work knowing that I put him in mortal sin and he might die that day. I say to the lady who wrote to you (and she won't like it), when your husband comes near you with a contraceptive hit him with a big bat and inform him that you are not a prostitute.

Mrs. J. R.

From Wisconsin:

Somebody who agrees with the Catholic Church on birth prevention has to speak up — so here goes. Funny how some people call the Church stupid whenever she crosses their selfish wills.

Rhythm never worked for us, nor is my husband a St. Joseph nor am I a Virgin Mary, so we share the responsibility for our eleven children, even though I'm only 32. Sure we talked about contraception at one time, especially when (after three) the doctor told me another baby would kill me. But we decided to trust God and He took care of us all. Sure, the children wear hand-me-downs, and we don't have steak, but we do have peace and plenty of love and laughs. To the lady who called the Church stupid I say, why don't you try prayer? But then I suppose you have forgotten how to pray.

Mrs. N. N.

From New Jersey:

I hasten to reply to the lady who called the Church stupid. Like the bull, I see red. I am waiting for my sixth child in ten years, and am convinced that having and rearing my family is my God-given vocation, my whole purpose in the world, and my assurance of salvation. I get furious when I hear people talk about hand-me-down clothes as if they were a disgrace. It may not be easy to raise a large family but in comparison with the habitual sin of birth prevention it is a pleasure.

Mrs. P. A.

From New York:

I disagree most heartily with the discontented mother who wrote in the February LIGURIAN. Not having the slightest idea on what she based her statement that nine out of ten Catholic married couples practice contraception, I must assume it was gathered from her own personal group of friends. Thus they must have a mutual weekly confession among themselves, encouraging one another to rearrange the

teachings of the Church, blaming priests because they won't agree with them, etc. I shall pray God that your letter writer will have the grace not to remain among the nine of her friends who are rebellious. . . .

Mrs. A. M.

From Iowa:

We receive many Catholic magazines, but never have I read in any one of them an article like that of the rebellious mother who called the Catholic Church "stupid." I've met a few such people and sure talk frankly to them about God's will. These people need more receiving the sacraments and prayer to obtain the grace of faith.

Mrs. N. N.

From Idaho:

It amazes and amuses me when these Catholics write to you about their demand for contraceptives against the teaching of their Church. You'd think they had just found the answer to all the world's problems. Having been a Protestant for 36 years I know all about contraceptives, even though I was never tempted to use them. But many mothers I knew who did use them lived in constant worry from month to month. Talk about a war of nerves! And the abortions! I thank God every day that I never got into a bad marriage that would keep me out of the Church, nor into any bad habits that might have so bothered my conscience that I couldn't live with myself. I don't deserve it, but my Catholic faith is the greatest thing I have.

Mrs. L. W.

From Wisconsin:

The letter in the February LIGURIAN rubbed me the wrong way at first reading, but later I felt pity for the writer.

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I wish someone could tell me why all mothers of large families are pictured as sickly and haggard. I have eight children, and I object to the typecasting. What's more, I know many mothers of more children who are easy to look at and so happy with their lot that they are fairly bubbling over. I don't claim any beauty titles, but after my eight pregnancies I'll match figures with any mother of one or two.

Mrs. N. N.

From Wisconsin:

Here's an answer to that bellyacher about birth control and large families, sickly mothers, etc. I come from a family of eight, wore plenty of hand-me-downs, but we were always healthy and happy and all had a high school education. After all the privations of rearing a large family on a small salary, my dear parents are still alive and in complete control of their faculties at 88. Nuff said!

Mrs. J. B.

From Indiana:

Speaking as a convert, I was shocked and resentful over the unchristian letter from a disgruntled mother in the February LIGUORIAN. I wish I could talk to that person. Why cannot some "cradle" Catholics appreciate the overflowing fountain of grace they can receive through the Church's teaching? "Thy rod and thy staff they comfort me." For me these holy words mean nothing other than Christ's Church.

Mrs. S. M. R.

From New Hampshire:

I take exception to the remark of the writer in the February LIGUORIAN that nine out of ten Catholic married couples practice contraception. We are fortunate to have many Catholic cou-

ples among our friends and I know that none of them practice contraception. Rhythm — yes; but not birth prevention. I think you should remind persons who write to you like the above that not only are they choosing the road to hell themselves, but are taking their partner along.

Mrs. N. R.

From New Jersey:

I am filled with pity and compassion for the mother who wrote about the "stupidity" of the Church. She completely misunderstands the mind of Christ on the subject of suffering and thereby misunderstands her best chance of happiness. Ask all your readers to pray and offer up some mortification for her. She must suffer a great deal.

Mrs. N. N.

From Texas:

When your correspondent states, "I think the stand of the Catholic Church on birth control is stupid," she is calling Jesus Christ stupid. As she should know, no authority in the Catholic Church can change this law of God. When two people marry, they assume many obligations, one of which is the proper use of sex. I take strong exception to her statement that nine out of ten Catholics practice contraception. This is untrue, but even if true, it would not turn wrong into right.

Mr. B. D.

From Virginia:

I have just reached page 39 of the February LIGUORIAN, and before I read another page I must comment on the letter called "stupid stand on birth control." All the hardships of being a mother of seven cannot possibly compare with the misery of living in sin. The Church is so right and I hope her

stand never changes (even if that were possible). I have a friend who is a convert (your magazine assisted in her conversion) and when she was first considering the Catholic faith, birth control was the big hurdle. She once told me she didn't need the Catholic Church to tell her it was wrong — she knew it was. She finally submitted and is a fine Catholic today.

Mrs. M. E. A.

From Kansas:

I must write to the lady who was given space in the February LIGUORIAN. Dear misguided woman: Your statement that nine out of ten Catholics practice contraception made me ill. With whom do you associate that you feel qualified to speak in behalf of all of us Catholics? I object vehemently to your statistics. It is bad enough to hear this from fallen away Catholics, but when it comes from one who claims to be a Catholic, my blood boils. My husband and I have a large group of Catholic friends, none of whom would even consider approving birth control. We have also lived abroad among Catholic service men none of whom believed in contraception.

Mrs. C. J. S.

From California:

Nothing tires me more than to hear or read of a person saying that they have the faith of Catholics and in the same breath that they practice contraception. This is a contradiction. . . .

Mrs. G. B.

From New York:

I feel sincerely sorry for this unfortunate rather than stupid soul who has succumbed to the lure of birth control. I too was once a member of this cult and can say from experience that

any Catholic mother is truly sick while in the clutches of this practice. Except for God's wonderful graces, the guidance of a good missionary, and the help of the LIGUORIAN, I would still be living in sin. Please don't ever stop "harping" on this subject, which too many of us would rather ignore to our peril.

Mrs. N. N.

From Pennsylvania:

What a pity you have to read a letter like the one in the February LIGUORIAN. My husband is 30 and I am 28, and we have seven beautiful, happy, healthy children and are expecting our eighth. We are delighted. The doctor says I am in perfect health; I have not been sick since I got married. Your correspondent maintains that almost all Catholics practice contraception. Well, I for one will not go to hell with her. How ignorant can one be to believe that the conduct of other fools makes a person wise to join them. I feel better to be able to write this.

Mrs. N. N.

From Illinois:

Let me say a few words to the lady who called the Church stupid for her stand on birth control. You are hanging around with the wrong crowd, and feel justified because many of your "crowd" are practicing contraception. How would you feel if you stepped into my "crowd," not so few in number as you seem to think, and found yourself surrounded by husbands and wives all trying to obey God's law? You remembered the birds of the air and the lilies of the field, but not how much more God loves you.

Mrs. J. B.

From Pennsylvania:

Honestly, the way this person reviles

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priests and the Church for their teaching on birth control, one would think priests made up this law to plague the married as a kind of revenge for their having made a vow of chastity. No matter how sympathetic a priest may be in a particular hardship case, he cannot dispense with God's law. As for these piteous large families, let your correspondent take a look at our eight happy, handsome, healthy, intelligent offspring. . . .

Mrs. M. H. S.

From Connecticut:

I am absolutely disgusted with the letter on birth control. I am 30, the mother of ten healthy and happy youngsters, expecting my eleventh. I am not sickly, surely not a vegetable, and our children are well adjusted. My husband and I share a wonderful life according to the ideals and laws laid down by Jesus Christ.

Mrs. E. A. J.

From Ohio:

I could hardly believe that anybody could write as the discontented Catholic mother did in your February issue. Thanks to God's goodness we live among people who accept the responsibilities of marriage. The crowning blow was the resentment against priests and nuns because of modern convents and rectories. She should see some of the conditions in which nuns and priests have been forced to live without a word of complaint.

Mrs. L. D.

From New Jersey:

I am a patient woman, but I cannot keep quiet after reading that letter in the February LIGUORIAN. It is my firm opinion that more unhappiness and nervous breakdowns are caused in married

women by the fear of having babies than by actually having them. Sure, there are crosses for mothers, but who ever said that the road to heaven was easy?

Mrs. J. L. D.

From New Jersey:

Being a happy mother of eight children, I was burned up by the letter on page 39 of the February LIGUORIAN. Tell your readers that here is one mother who is proud to be pregnant, who is not sickly, whose children are happy and clean and neat, get enough fruit, milk and other foods, and who counts on God's grace for everything needed. And I know many families just like ours.

Mrs. J. C

From Montana:

I have been told never to write a letter in anger, but I cannot resist the temptation now. The letter on page 39 of the February LIGUORIAN so infuriated me that I am writing before even reading your answer. I hate to have anyone speaking for me and nine out of ten of my fellow Catholics. Actually, nine out of ten of the Catholic couples I know do not practice contraception. Average this with what your correspondent said and her findings are already altered by 40 per cent. I'm willing to bet that a comprehensive survey would alter the figure even more. But regardless of the outcome of such a survey, neither Christ nor His Church has ever said that right is determined by what a majority do.

Mrs. R. O.

From Washington:

My heart aches for the mother who wrote calling the Church stupid. Experience has taught us a heartbreaking

lesson. After a painful delivery of my first child we were afraid and actually practiced birth prevention for two weeks. We are (years later) still paying for our sin, because we have long since wanted more children, but God has not granted them to us. You cannot cross God's will by any kind of rationalization without paying a penalty.

Mrs. N. N.

From Texas:

This letter was provoked by the arti-

cle "Stupid Stand on Birth Control." I can only pity and pray for the person who wrote the original letter. My wife and I have reviewed our life together and noted that our Lord has always provided for each additional mouth to be fed with an overabundance. We tried rhythm at one time, and when it did not work, we said, if the Lord wants us to have more children, we shall have them. We could find little consolation in thinking that we would be accompanied by many on the path to hell.

Mr. G. E. P.

PRAISE THE LORD!

Most high, all-powerful and good Lord, to Thee belong praise, glory and all benediction. To Thee only are they due, and there is no man worthy to name Thee.

Praise be to Thee, O Lord, on account of all creatures, but especially for our brother the sun, to whom we owe the light of day! He is beautiful and sends forth rays of great splendor, and bears witness to Thee, O my God!

Praise be to Thee, my Lord, for our sister the moon and for the stars! It is Thou who hast placed them in the heavens, bright and beautiful.

Praise be to Thee, my Lord, for my brother the wind, for the air and the clouds, and the calmness of every season, whatever it may be! For it is by means of them that Thou sustainest all creatures.

Praise be to Thee, my Lord, for our sister the water, which is most useful, humble, precious, and chaste!

Praise be to Thee, my Lord, for our brother the fire! By means of it Thou dost illumine the night; it is pleasant to see, unconquerable and strong.

Praise be to Thee, my Lord, for our mother the earth, which sustains us, nourishes us, and brings forth the variegated flowers and herbs, and every kind of fruit!

Praise be to Thee, my Lord, for those who forgive for the love of Thee, and patiently bear infirmity and tribulation! Happy those who continue in peace! For it is the Most High who will crown them.

Be praised, my Lord, because of our sister the death of the body, which no man living can escape! Woe to him who dies in mortal sin! Happy those who, at the hour of death, are found conformable to Thy most holy will! For the second death shall not harm them.

Praise and bless my Lord; return Him thanks and serve Him with great humility.

St. Francis Assisi



Problems of Professional and Business People

A Medical Student's Problem

PROBLEM: I am a medical student, and in conversation with one of my classmates I heard that "body snatching," the stealing of newly buried corpses from graves, used to be perpetrated by medical students for the purpose of anatomical research. I know of no such practice among medical students at the present day. However, my classmate argued that, although this gruesome method of obtaining bodies for the purpose of study is no longer in vogue, it would not be a very serious offense. For, he says, the dead body is not worth anything, when it is to be left in the ground to disintegrate, and it could serve a far better purpose if it were used for medical research. He adds further, that the relatives will not be grieved if they know nothing about the theft. I feel that his arguments have no real value, and that body snatching is a grave sin. Yet I find it hard to answer this young man. What is the solution?

ANSWER: Our correspondent is fully correct in his belief that it is a grave sin to steal a corpse for the purpose of anatomical research. Indeed, this is one of the crimes to which the Church has attached a penalty. In Canon 2328 of the Code of Canon Law it is stated that one who violates the bodies or graves of the dead for the purpose of stealing or for any other evil purpose shall be punished by a personal interdict, shall be *ipso facto*

infamous, and if he be a cleric shall be deposed. The first and third of these penalties are imposed only when the bishop pronounces a sentence, but the second — infamy — is inflicted on the culprit as soon as he commits the crime. It means that in the eyes of the Church this person is regarded as a very loathsome and disgraceful individual, and as a result he is forbidden to fulfill certain religious functions, such as officiating as a godparent at a baptism. It is to be noted that these penalties are enacted whether the bodies belonged to Catholics or to non-Catholics, and whether the graves are blessed or not.

In former years it seems that this crime of body snatching was not uncommon among medical students. In recent times, however, it is apparently rarely done. One reason is that nowadays a sufficient number of corpses are willed to medical schools or are given to these institutions by hospitals in which many of those who die have no means for providing burial. Such means of procuring bodies are perfectly legitimate. But when a person steals a human body, even for the purpose of anatomical research, it is a deed of irreverence to the remains of a human being, who was (or could have been) once the temple of the Holy Ghost (through sanctifying grace), and perhaps even the tabernacle of the Holy Eucharist. This same thought, the sacredness of

the human body, should inspire the medical student to a sense of respect when he is using the body as a subject of his research.

Pope Pius XII, in a discourse delivered in 1956, made the following profound statements: "The dead body of a human being deserves to be regarded entirely differently (from the body of an animal). The body was the abode of a spiritual and immortal soul, an essentially constitutive part of a human person whose dignity it shared. Something of this dignity still remains in the corpse. We can say also that, since it is a component of man, it has been formed to the image and likeness of God, which extends far beyond the general vestiges of divine resemblance that are found both in the animals deprived of intelligence and even in purely material inanimate creatures. Even to the dead body we can apply to a certain extent the words of the apostle: 'Do you not know that your members are the temple of the Holy Spirit Who is in you?' (I Cor. 6:19) Finally, the

dead body is destined to the resurrection and eternal life. This is not true of the body of an animal."

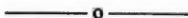
The pope goes on to say, in this discourse, that a person does a generous thing when he wills his body, or portions of it, to a medical school for the study of anatomy; for in this way he may make it possible for doctors to treat more effectively some form of human ailment. It should be noted, however, that if a considerable portion of the body remains when it is no longer necessary for study, it should be decently buried.

The theft of a human body, besides being an act of irreverence, is also a grave sin against charity in respect to the surviving relatives, since they naturally are greatly pained when an incident of this kind occurs. The fact that they do not hear about it does not minimize the guilt of those who commit this detestable crime.

Very Rev Francis J. Connell,
C.S.S.R., S.T.D., LL.D., L.H.D.
The Catholic University of America

LIGUORIAN BINDERS

We have had hard-cover binders made to order for holding 12 copies of THE LIGUORIAN in a single volume. Anyone can insert the issues in the binder. Those who preserve their copies of THE LIGUORIAN for reference will find the binders very handy, with the index always at the end of the December issue. Order binders from THE LIGUORIAN, Liguori, Mo., at \$2.50 each.



IF YOU CHANGE YOUR ADDRESS

Please notify us promptly of your change of address, giving both your old and new address. It makes it easy for our office if you cut your stenciled address from the rear cover of one of your issues of THE LIGUORIAN and send it in when asking for a change of address. Notify us by the tenth of the month if your copy for that month has not been delivered.

*This letter could be addressed
to all engaged couples;
it could be addressed to all
married couples — whether
they have been married
for one year or for half a
century.*

THE REAL TRIANGLE IN EVERY MARRIAGE

Dear John and Helen:

Thank you for the beautiful and expressive wedding invitation. I would like very much to be present on your day of days, but will not be able to be there. But I am sending you some thoughts that may help to increase your understanding of the sacrament that you will give to each other on June 10.

It is wonderful to hear that you both have made arrangements to make a weekend retreat shortly before the wedding. The day of your wedding is an important day, and it demands spiritual as well as material preparation. You prepared in a special way for the reception of your first Holy Communion, and it is fitting that you condition your soul also for Christ's coming to you in the sacrament of matrimony. Seminarians devote many days to retreat before

THOMAS E. TOBIN, C.S.S.R.

they change from laymen to clerics; all engaged couples would do well to spend some time in retreat before they pass from the single to the married state.

Ministers of the Sacrament

I am sure you realize that you are the ministers of the sacrament of matrimony, that you marry and give the sacrament to each other. The priest and two witnesses will be necessarily present, but the two of you will be the ones empowered by Christ to confer the sacrament of matrimony on each other. Ordinarily it is the priest who is privileged to administer the sacraments. Thus it is usually the hand of the priest that pours the saving waters of baptism

over the forehead of the infant; it is the hand of the priest that is raised in sacramental absolution over the sinful soul; it is the hand of the priest that places the Eucharistic Christ upon the tongue of the communicant. But the hand of the priest will not be raised to unite you in marriage.

The priest will instruct you to join your right hands and with united hands you will give yourselves to each other. "I, John take you, Helen, for my lawful wife, to have and to hold, from this day forward, for better, for worse, for richer, for poorer, in sickness and in health, until death do us part." By these words, John, you will give the sacrament of matrimony to Helen. When you in turn speak these words to John, Helen, you will give the sacrament to him. Only then will the hand of the priest be raised to bless the sacrament which you have given and received.

The Sacrament

You will administer the sacrament of matrimony to each other. But just what does that mean?

You know that any sacrament is a visible sign instituted by Christ to give grace. Christ makes use of some natural element which signifies and also produces a supernatural effect. Thus water, which is so essential to life, is used in baptism to symbolize as well as produce supernatural life. Oil, which strengthens the body, signifies and also causes strength of soul in confirmation.

What is the visible sign which Christ intended to be used in the sacrament of matrimony? It is the hu-

man love which you will express in the words of your marriage vows. Human love is as old as man and woman and was made the basis of the natural contract of marriage in Paradise. God wanted to share His infinite perfections not only with Adam and Eve but also with countless other human persons. He could have given life to these human persons as He did to Adam and Eve. But God wanted others to share in His power and love, and created man and woman so that they would be attracted to each other in human love. God would then join His creative love to the human love of the husband and wife and unite an immortal soul to the body prepared by the love of the husband and wife.

Christ took this human love and added a new dimension to it, a sign and cause of divine love. He did not destroy the essential nature of human love, but elevated it to the level of divine love. When you speak your marriage vows you will not only give human love, but also divine love to each other. You will make each other's soul more beautiful in the sight of God by the increase of sanctifying grace which you are privileged to bestow through the sacrament of matrimony. These words draw you closer not only to each other, but also to God.

Live the Sacrament

The sacrament of marriage merely begins on your wedding day. St. Robert Bellarmine tells us that in a certain sense we can compare marriage to the Blessed Sacrament itself. When the priest cradles in his hands

a wafer of bread, he pronounces the sacramental words only once, but the sacrament itself, the presence of Christ, remains as long as the appearances of bread remain. In the same way, you speak the sacramental words of your marriage only once, but the sacrament itself remains. The sacrament will be merely begun when you exchange your marriage vows inside the sanctuary. As you leave, arm in arm, you will be a new husband and wife about to begin the great adventure of living in all its depths the sacrament. Your married love and life is sacramentalized!

Just as a man's whole life is changed by the reception of holy orders, so your life will be made different by the reception of matrimony. When a priest preaches, teaches, celebrates Mass and visits the sick, he is fulfilling the role given him by holy orders. In a similar way, when you perform the various duties toward each other or the children you will be living the sacrament of matrimony. This means that every act of love, great or small, for each other or for the children, is sacramentalized and increases sanctifying grace in your soul.

This sacramental love covers everything in your life together. Thus, John, when you leave each morning for work you are going to live the sacrament of matrimony. Your work will be a part of the sacrament because you are a Christian husband who is working to support his wife and children. Even taking down the storm windows and putting up the

screens fall within the scope of the sacrament! Helen, when the monotony of the continuous round of sweeping, dusting, ironing, sewing, washing and cooking seem to sap your spirit, remember that these humdrum tasks are valuable in the sight of God because they are part of the sacrament. Everything in your marriage is sacramental with the exception of sin.

Sacramental Grace

As you know, each sacrament gives a twofold grace. The first grace, which is common to all the sacraments, is sanctifying grace, which makes your soul pleasing to God. All of the sacraments bestow sanctifying grace, either by giving it for the first time (as in baptism), or by restoring it if it has been lost (as in penance), or by increasing it (as in the other sacraments).

Each sacrament also imparts a special kind of grace that is called sacramental grace. This sacramental grace gives a special claim upon the actual grace needed to fulfill the duties proper to each sacrament. Thus confirmation strengthens the Christian to profess his faith in the face of difficulties. Penance helps the person to be truly sorry for the sins confessed as well as to be sincerely determined to avoid those sins in the future. Holy orders assures to the priest the right to expect from God all the assistance needed in carrying out the duties of his state in life. Matrimony grants to the married couple a firm confidence that God will help them fulfill all the obligations of their life together.

What does this mean in a practical way? It means that you have a right to the actual grace of God which will help you act in accordance with your vocation. The sacramental grace of matrimony will enable you to act as husband and wife and later on, God willing, as father and mother. You will be able to depend upon special light for your minds and powerful strength for your wills in order to make and follow the correct decisions in your life.

Light for the Mind

This divine light will brighten many areas of your life. It may be a matter of choosing the right job, a matter which is so important for the financial needs of the family as well as the personal satisfaction of the husband. You may have difficulty in making up your minds about a certain house, its location, price or arrangement. There may come a certain tension in your life together, a tension that is felt but is not understood. You may not know just how to reach a certain child. Helen, you may have a sick child and not be able to contact a doctor. You may not know what is wrong and what should be done. Now in these, as in all matters, God expects you to use your reason to try to figure out what to do. But there will be times when you cannot decide, as no course seems to be decidedly better than the other. In such cases, at times, you will find that everything becomes clear and that everything falls into place. This may be the result of your own thinking which has been assisted by the light of actual grace.

But at times the light will come so suddenly and shine so brightly that it must be a special effect of the sacrament of matrimony.

Courage for the Will

Light for the mind is absolutely necessary, but so also is courage for the will. Knowledge alone will not lead to action. Even the great apostle, St. Paul, admitted unhappily that he did not always do that which he knew he should do. Human nature finds, at times, a certain reluctance to take the necessary steps to keep the law of God or to better one's life. It may be a matter where birth control seems very attractive and the easiest solution to a problem, and great courage is required to keep God's law. You may realize that you should step up the tempo of your Christian life by receiving the sacraments more frequently or by saying the family rosary. You may know that you should pull away from a group that is pagan in its principles and anti-clerical in its judgments. You may be dragging your feet for a long time when suddenly you make the little spurt necessary to do what you realize you should do. Again we may point to the influence of the sacramental grace of matrimony which has aided you in the accomplishment of these tasks.

These are some thoughts that may help you prepare better for your wedding day and your sacramental life together. Give yourselves to each other in human love. Realize that you are conferring on each other the sacrament of matrimony with all its

sanctifying and actual graces. Live this sacrament and continually call upon the actual graces that are there for the taking.

I wish you all the happiness which God intends you to have in your married life and which He provided for

by means of the graces of the sacrament of matrimony.

The rest of your life is in the hands of God. His grace will not be wanting to your needs.

God bless you!
Father Tobin

WATER INTO WINE

Surely, if a work of mercy is not accompanied by charity, it brings no profit to the man who performs it, even though it relieves its recipient. It is like water, not wine, since, as the apostle says, "If I distribute all my goods to feed the poor . . . yet do not have charity, it profits me nothing." On the other hand, if the work of mercy is prompted by charity, then the water turns into wine, because the power of charity warms what was cold, flavors what was tasteless, and illumines what was dark. Thus, water is spiritually changed into wine, and what was naturally good becomes even better, and earns an eternal reward.

*Pope Innocent III
quoted by John XXIII*

THE LIGHT IS THE LAMB

For us, whose duties lie in a seat of learning and science, may we never be carried away by any undue fondness for any human branch of study, so as to be forgetful that our true wisdom, and nobility, and strength, consist in the knowledge of almighty God. Nature and man are our studies, but God is higher than all. It is easy to lose Him in His works. It is easy to become over attached in our own pursuit, to substitute it for religion, and to make it the fuel of pride. Our secular attainments will avail us nothing, if they be not subordinate to religion. The knowledge of the sun, moon and stars, of the earth and its three kingdoms, of the classics or of history, will never bring us to heaven. We may "thank God," that we are not as the illiterate and the dull; and those whom we despise, if they do but know how to ask mercy of Him, know what is very much more to the purpose of getting to heaven, than all our letters and our science. Let this be the spirit in which we end our (studies). Let us thank Him for all that He has done for us, for what He is doing by us; but let nothing that we know or that we can do, keep us from a personal individual adoption of the great apostle's words, "Christ Jesus came into this world to save sinners, of whom I am the chief."

Cardinal Newman

SIDEBLANCES

Guilt Feelings about Neighbors in Need

By the Bystander

THE day after President Kennedy announced his program of personal, social and economic aid to South America, the *Wall Street Journal* emitted, in its lead editorial, a wail of anguish over the whole idea. Behind the anguish was the peculiarly unchristian idea that, since we are not guilty of nor responsible for the poverty and suffering of many millions in South America, we have no obligation to want to do anything about it. Coupled with this idea is a misinterpretation of some of President Kennedy's phrases. When the latter says that relieving extreme misery in South America constitutes an unfulfilled task, that the inhuman poverty and suffering of millions of our neighbors "lie upon our conscience," the *Wall Street Journal* interprets such words to mean that we accept "guilt" for these conditions. Even waiving the fact that there have been some North American exploiters of South American peoples and resources, we assert stoutly that the president did not mean to say that we North Americans have a guilt that requires us in justice to make reparation. The extreme suffering of needy neighbors lies on our con-

science in the same sense that Christ laid it on the conscience of passing strangers to help the man who fell among robbers on the way to Jericho; in the same sense that can be drawn from His words: "Whatsoever you do to the least of My little ones, you do to Me."

We are not approaching this subject from a political angle, or favoring a Democratic president's program against the objections of what is usually a Republican paper. Indeed, if anyone cares to check this point by looking through past issues of the *LIGUORIAN*, he will find that we wrote on the same theme in Republican President Eisenhower's regime, favoring his "principle" of aid to foreign peoples in extreme need. Nor are we writing with any intent to discuss the national economic problems of aid to half-starving peoples in foreign lands.

No answer will be found here as to whether the United States can afford large grants of aid to needy foreign peoples without placing the basic welfare of this nation in jeopardy; nor, to the more realistic question of how much can be afforded. The only

point we want to make is that, as a humanitarian, somewhat Christian, and fairly prosperous nation, we are bound to feel a sense of obligation toward human beings in other lands, especially in lands of our own hemisphere, who live in squalor and penury and economic hopelessness, no matter what has caused or occasioned such conditions. Experts must answer the question of how much we can do and how we should do it. But none of us should say, with the *Wall Street Journal*, that we did not cause the misery; therefore we may ignore it. None of us should say, "They made their bed; let them lie in it; it is none of our business."

LET it be said that this attitude has not been the spirit of those Americans who have done the most (little though it has been) to relieve the suffering of foreign peoples living on a sub-human social and economic scale. We speak of the hundreds of stalwart, self-sacrificing, young men and women who have gone as missionaries to such people. It is true that these missionary priests and sisters and brothers had the dual motive of love for God and love for their fellow man to fire their zeal. They had the primary desire to help the people to whom they went to save their souls. They quickly learned, however, that the souls could be reached only through the bodies; that starvation must be warded off; education must be promoted; medical

and nursing care must be given before there could be much fruit in working for the soul. These missionaries did not say: "These are not my people. I did not cause their misery. They have not helped themselves as they might have done. Therefore I owe them nothing." They said the contrary: "These are my people, my neighbors, my brothers and sisters. Their need gives them a special claim on whatever service I can render to them. They are on my conscience."

The writer of these very lines has been in some of the bleakest and most poverty-stricken areas of South America, areas where 40 per cent of the children die of malnutrition or avoidable disease before the age of five. He has seen that the first hope that entered these people's lives came through the missionaries who, with generously given American dollars and medicines and foods and basic implements began to push back the frontiers of despair. There has been little public recognition of what these representatives of the United States have done; but they do prove that, without personal guilt feelings, favored and prosperous individuals can take upon their conscience the underprivileged, the starving, the abandoned of any nation.

Something of this same spirit has been evoked in American youth by the President's first official suggestion of a *Peace Corps*

to bring aid to those who are in grave need in other lands. We are aware that working out the details of such a *Peace Corps* will involve many hazards and dangers. The screening process will have to eliminate the selfish, the crackpots, the dreamers who at the first sight of filth and squalor will want to run back to their aseptic homes. It will have to make sure that those who go into malaria-infested jungles and mud-hut villages will possess some skills and abilities to render service and not just clumsy and useless good will.

All these difficulties and perils cannot wipe out the fact that thousands of American youth want to do something; if there are starving babies in Brazil or India or Africa, they do feel a sense of guilt, not in the *Wall Street Journal* sense that they themselves caused the starvation, but in the same sense that a passing stranger would feel guilty if he did not help a cripple out of a burning building. This is a right and wholesome and truly Christian sense of guilt, and we hope it will be prodded and stimulated and urged into action.

HOWEVER, both the work of the missionaries and that hoped for from the *Peace Corps* will always be but a trickle if it is not accompanied by nationwide and inter-nation wide material and professional support. It is easy to say, and true, that mere money does not solve the problems of un-

derprivileged foreign peoples. All the intricate questions of through whose hands the money is to pass (and perhaps stop), of what projects will help the most people, of when the money should be in grants and when in loans, of how much can be afforded by any one prosperous nation like the United States, have to be solved with the very best expert advice that can be found. The one thing we North Americans should not do is to close our eyes to the dank misery we know exists; to refuse to accept the principle that, if we can, we should help those who are in extreme need; or even to utter the callous words made eternally infamous by a murderer: "Am I my brother's keeper?"

GLORY

A man who longs for the true, eternal glory does not worry about the glory of the world. A man who seeks popularity and fame, or does not in his heart despise it, undoubtedly cares little for the glory of heaven.

Imitation

CORRECT ESTIMATE

Praise adds nothing to your holiness, nor does blame take anything from it. You are what you are in God's sight. If you consider well how you stand with God, you will not care what men say about you. Men look to outward appearances, but God looks to the heart. Men consider the deed, but God judges the motive.

Imitation

readers retort



In which readers are invited to express their minds on articles and opinions published in *The Liguorian*. Letters must be signed and full address of the writer must be given, though city and name will be withheld from publication on request.

Matchmaking and the Laity

There is one point that I should like to make in connection with the question asked in the March LIGUORIAN, "Should the Clergy Promote Matchmaking?" The clergy have enough duties apiece for twins, if not triplets. Good grief! What will our priests be expected to do next? (This, of course, is a biased opinion, coming as it does from one who has a brother who is a priest. More than that, I work in a parish office.) Last October, when I was making a retreat, the Monsignor who is in charge of the retreat house, was giving the uninitiated the mechanics of saying the Little Office of the Blessed Virgin Mary. One dear lady got up and wanted to know why there wasn't some organization to teach people how to say this office. Poor Monsignor! This stopped him cold for about thirty seconds, after which he said that there were getting to be too many organizations and too little actual praying.

But to get back to the laity and matchmaking! It seems that the laity have within easy access an area which might be termed a made-to-order Introduction Service, which is much neglected, and which could be used in the interests of matchmaking. There are many, many already married people who know of single men and women who might be interested in each other.

Would it be too much or too difficult to include an unmarried couple or two in an evening at home or to invite them to a dinner? Perhaps they must be invited singly; perhaps they are total strangers to each other; but they are your friends. Or is there some ironclad social rule which restricts simple get-togethers to MARRIED couples only? Introduce single Catholics to each other in your home and let them get acquainted. Married people can do this much more easily than priests can do it in their rectory.

Cleveland, Ohio

Mrs. D. M. P.

Repeat Engagement

After reading the letters in your March issue, referring to the feature letter in the December LIGUORIAN, *Rocks and Roses for My Husband*, I dug up the December copy and once more read the original letter with the same nods and chuckles with which I read it the first time. There are such men. I am sure that the writer of the feature letter was referring not just to her spouse, nor to all husbands in a lump, but to those husbands who could be put into a composite picture; husbands who are really good men, but men who have faults, as all of us have, but who are allowed to go on and on with those faults and who never make any effort, seemingly, to correct these faults. The writer did this, I believe, in

the name of (and with the intention of helping) all the wives she knows or has known, wives who have wept into her cups of coffee and confided in her. At age 41 I have heard many a hair-raising confidence, and I know someone who fits one, or more, of the types she so eloquently described.

The inspiration for the original letter seemed to be the communication from a certain gentleman (which was published some months previously) which I did not have the (dubious) pleasure of reading, and she spoke up to bring that gentleman down off the pedestal he seems to have constructed for himself, lest other husbands might get out the do-it-yourself kits and do likewise. So I feel obligated in the name of all those wives who could see in their spouse one or more or all the faults she listed to say, "Thank you!" One question: are we supposed to make not even the gentlest effort to try to help our husbands correct these faults? Are such faults never to be mentioned, so that the husbands will be saved from the discovery that they are not perfect? Some people, happy in their own little nests, have no compassion for those not-so-happy ones — and how could faults ever be corrected if some crusader didn't point them out and try to do something to improve the situation? The letters you published in praise of husbands in the March issue echo my own sentiments, and it's a far from "bitter and hateful" letter that can inspire prayerful thanksgiving "for the husbands God chose for us." We don't count our little, daily blessings often enough, and once in a while a sharply defined picture of unhappy wives and selfish husbands (it works the other way around, too!) can jar us out of our usual habit of taking decent husbands for granted. One letter

said, "Please don't print a reply to Rocks and Roses for My Husband." Why not? I say give the husbands equal time and space. It would give all of us gals a better look at ourselves, and many of us would stop and take a second look — long and hard — and maybe do something to correct our faults. This is what I think was the purpose of the rocks and roses for the husbands.

New Jersey

Mrs. T. F. M.

• *Shortly after the feature letter on husbands appeared in the December issue we received a flood of letters, many of which severely criticized us for publishing the letter. It seemed that the world was suddenly filled with wives who were married to perfect husbands, and wives who were content to let their husbands dawdle along with all their faults, without making much if any, effort to help them improve their character, disposition or attitude. This was a surprising turn of events to us, since we could not forget the many letters in our files from wives who begged us to let the inconsiderate husbands know about their faults and the unhappiness they were causing in the family circle. Now we have received a good number of letters similar to the above, letters which point up the fact that the article might have been written, not as part of a smear campaign against husbands as a class, but with the sincere desire to wake up some of the "imperfect" husbands who might chance to read the letter.*

The editors

• It's comforting to learn from the letters you published in the March issue that there are so many happy wives with perfect husbands and perfect marriages to boot. But am I the only one to have the experience of realizing that

in many cases these wives are the first ones to be quick in criticizing another human being's "failings" and suggesting what can be done to improve things? At least the wife who wrote the December feature letter is a human being like myself and who, at times, finds married life trying. Better she get it off her chest and on paper than to publish it by word of mouth to the people in the neighborhood. What really made me smile was the statement of one writer who said that a man is only a little boy — and yet "let him be the head of the family."

Michigan

Mrs. N. W.

School for Saints?

I have just finished reading the letter from T. E. C. from Chicago about a possible school for saints. I, too, am very much interested in the proposition of becoming a saint. When such a thing is mentioned to most people they look at you like you are some kind of nut. While kicking around in this rat race we call life in the world I have never heard it put across as well as this lad from Chicago has expressed it.

Kearny, N. J.

J. M. L.

Let me be the first to acclaim the gentleman who came up with the innocent and simple statement in your letters department, "I am a man who is trying to become a saint, because I have been told that anybody can become a saint — and I believe it." That should be recorded as an all-time classical quotation. This man has written what the mundane Catholic-since-birth often laughs at — a testament of a soul on the road to canonization.

Chicago, Ill.

W. R.

The man who is trying to become a saint has accomplished something by

just writing his letter to your magazine. I am 62, still trying to be a saint. Several times in my life I have attended daily Mass for years at a stretch. Now a severe illness has again interrupted the habit, but thanks to T. E. C. I'll start again.

Brooklyn, N. Y.

M. K.

There IS a school for training people to be saints — and right in Chicago — the home of T. E. C., whose letter you published in the March LIGUORIAN! It is the Secular Institute of the Opus Dei, which exists to inspire in lay people the pursuit of perfection. This institute has a very active program for married people, who desire to live a life of perfection. Most married people are unaware that such an opportunity is available to them, simply because they ARE married. T. E. C.'s letter could have been written by me five years ago, but I learned about Opus Dei. The address for this "school of saints" might be a good lead for T. E. C. and many others. For men, contact: Woodlawn Residence, 5544 Woodlawn Avenue, Chicago 37, Illinois. For women, contact: Sher-Lake Residence, 6963 Sheridan Road, Chicago 26, Illinois. Wilmette, Ill.

Mrs. J. B.

Why Don't They Do Something?

In the face of the mounting objections of parents to the religious life for their children, why does not the hierarchy do something to make that life, especially in a sisterhood, more acceptable to parents? Here are my suggestions: 1. Eliminate all restrictions on communications between child and parents. Encourage frequent letters even during Lent and Advent. 2. Inform parents whenever the child is sick. 3. Give parents the right to visit their child whenever they feel like doing so.

4. Station the child as close to home or possibly, preferably in her home parish. 5. Improve visiting facilities in convents. 6. Give the child a vacation at home with the parents once, or better, twice every year. These reforms should be the right of parents and would lessen their resentment to the religious life for their daughters.

Anon.

N. N.

• *While some of these "reforms" have merit and have been given careful attention by some active orders of sisters, all of them taken together would make a rather shabby sacrifice out of a girl's consecrating herself to God and to work for souls. Parents who would insist on such things as complete freedom to visit their daughter in the convent at any time, unlimited rights to communication by telephone or letter, the demand that their daughter be stationed near her home, would greatly diminish the value of their own sacrifice and their daughters. We wonder if more vocations would be worth that price.*

The editors

More Contented Mothers

I have just read the letter from Contented Mother who said that she would like to see more letters from women who are happy in their married life. How refreshing finally to hear from one housewife who is not complaining! It seems to be the fashion to be a "poor, overworked mother." I, too, am as happy now as I was on my wedding day, when a whole new life opened before me. Children? We have seven wonderful, noisy little ones. The oldest is seven — and no twins either! After eight years of married life my husband is still so very wonderful and to me the perfect man. Of course, we have had trials, such as unemployment, illness and all the problems that go with a growing family, but through our Bless-

ed Mother many wonderful things have been granted to us. Yes, I am a happy housewife and I thank God for all His gifts to our family every day.

Oklahoma

Mrs. C. J. L.

I am sitting in my home, looking around at what I have, and the "thank you" I feel inside of me is so great that I feel it must be heard all over the neighborhood. God has been so good to me. To ME! I haven't done anything to deserve the blessings I have received. I don't even take enough time to tell God how much I appreciate these good things. How sad that so many Catholics, who have had the precious gift of faith since birth, still do not realize how much they possess. I am 28 years old and expecting my seventh child. When I say expecting, I mean I am looking forward to it, just as I have looked forward to each of the others. I have been thinking about the six children I now have, and trying to imagine life without any one of them, and even the thought brings hurt. I know again a sense of wonderful fulfillment in realizing that a new child will be ours. A new child with all the things it means — the monotonous things: the extra work, the endless laundry, the cooking. But how small they seem when compared to the rewards! The day my son first holds out his arms to me — his eyes trusting, bright with an awareness of who I am, and what I mean to him! Who could say, "I don't want any more like you?"

But our life is no small, peaceful oasis. There are days when I must pray, not once, but many times, for the strength to listen to just one more argument, for the patience to explain that it is wrong to throw rocks or call your sister names or sit on the baby. There are days when I would truly like to get

away from the confusion, the heavy responsibilities; but deep inside I know I would never change places with anyone in this world ever, because this place I have is mine and mine only, and only God has the power to take it away from me. Perhaps if more parents would place their destinies in the great, gentle hands of almighty God and let Him decide the course of events, more favorable things would begin to happen to them. I know that if there is any chance for me to save my soul, then that chance has been intensified by my family. For who can have a large family and not learn sacrifice? Who can have a large family and not learn at least a degree of humility? These are hard lessons to learn, but in the closeness and warmth of a family circle they are much less painfully learned and more lasting.

California

Mrs. G. E. R.

I am a young mother of six small children. Not so long ago I, too, was a discontented mother. Then I read a LIGUORIAN article called "School for Mothers" in which the writer suggested offering as a gift to God every dull, boring, monotonous moment of life with a large number of small children. That was the turning point for me. Then came "Religion for Babies," which made me realize I was missing a precious privilege of teaching my little ones about Jesus and Mary. This could go on and on, but I must mention "Ten Faults of Wives," after which I gave up complaining for Lent and forever, I hope. This month your magazine contains a "Check List for Parents," and I am pleased to find that we are doing a reasonably good job of raising our little ones. In fact, just yesterday our oldest daughter asked if a certain couple were in a "mixed-up" marriage. Great credit for my newly

found peace of mind goes to your fine magazine. My desire now is to spread this wonderful feeling of contented accomplishment to my friends by introducing the LIGUORIAN to them. Would it be possible to get your wonderful articles into booklet or pamphlet form? Imagine how valuable they would be, not only for mothers to refer to in moments of discouragement, but for priests to use in Cana Conferences, for reading by married couples during retreats, Christian Family Movement, etc.

Michigan

Mrs. C. M. M.

• *Many of the articles published in the LIGUORIAN have been published as reprints in pamphlet form. A complete list of titles may be obtained by writing for the free pamphlet catalog to Liguorian Pamphlets, Liguori, Missouri.*

The editors

• I don't think there are too many contented mothers in the United States, but I am one. I just have had my fifth child, so I guess I have a right to speak up. To all discontented mothers I suggest this thought: we could be in Russia, or Cuba, or Africa; or we could have cancer or some other worse thing than having children and routine housework and indifferent husbands. And remember, we have such wonderful helpers and friends in the mother of God, and St. Gerard, the mothers' saint. We have God Himself Who said, "Come to Me all you who labor and are heavily burdened and I will refresh you." Our mistake is that we try everything else instead of going to these friends — and until we do there will never be real contentment in our lives.

Minnesota

Mrs. C. S.

Into the Hills!

In the April issue of the LIGUORIAN you published a letter by M. J. R. who

complained about what she called the Church's tendency to emphasize externals, rituals, symbolisms, non-liturgical devotions, etc., in preference to promoting an interest in the fundamental principles of Christianity and the virtues. And she added, "If we were only half as zealous as the Jehovah's Witnesses. . . ."

The old line! I should like to ask M. J. R. whether he or she, himself or herself, is half as zealous as the Witnesses. If so, I have nothing more to say; but if not, why the criticism of others? We have heard that line variously expressed many, many, many times. "I do not want to serve God through fear, so I do not think of hell. I want to cultivate the love of God." Very good! How much time do you actually spend in meditation on the love of God? And just how ardent are you in doing His will which, He tells us, is the mark of our love? "I do not have to go to church to worship God. I can go into the hills and lift my soul to Him." How often have you gone into the hills? "I have been coming to this church for years and not one person has ever spoken to me." Well, how many have you spoken to? "Oh, I did not want to put myself forward." And so on. Many people are too much occupied in criticising others to bother about their own failures. On the other hand, some people are so busy doing things worthwhile, that they do not have time to bother about criticising others. Which are the better Christians? El Paso, Tex. Rt. Rev. H. D. B.

Room for All in Texas!

I was pleased to see that you had an article in the March LIGUORIAN about the *Cursillos* — the new work of the Church for laymen in Texas. I was happy to see that attention was given to this wonderful form of Catholic Ac-

tion. But nowhere in the article did you mention the name of the Oblate Fathers, although they are the ones who started the movement along the Mexican border and spread it through Texas. In fact, Father Augustine Petru, O. M. I., does not even have the privilege of seeing "O.M.I." after his name. I am quite sure that it was simply an oversight, and I am sure you would want to correct this.

New Orleans, La.

Father J. J. S.,
O.M.I.

• *We regret that the Oblate Fathers were not mentioned specifically in the article, and we sincerely desire that they be given due credit for the work they have done in connection with the project of establishing the Cursillos. We must state, however, that the writer of the article had no indication, either from his printed sources or from personal interview, that Father Petru is an Oblate Father. We should like now to make proper acknowledgments to Father Petru and to all the Oblate Fathers who have given themselves to this work. We should also like to make similar acknowledgments to other priests, who, according to information received after the article was published, took part and are still active in the work of the Cursillos, namely, Father Fernandez of Waco, who, we are told, was the first to give a Cursillo in Texas, and has by this time given 39 Cursillos; also Father Briganti of Austin, who has worked hard to organize the movement in Texas, and Father Dussan of San Antonio, who is also a great leader of the Cursillos.*

The editors

Kinds Words

Thank you for an immensely helpful magazine! I have been interested in all your articles, and not one has ever hurt my "sensibilities."

Oregon

Mrs. F. S. A.

THE LIGUORIAN

Head of the

RICHARD STRASS, C.S.S.R.

House

The Sacred Heart in Your Home

IN THE Gospels Christ is often portrayed in the act of visiting a home. Always when He did so He brought kindness and peace, happiness and sometimes healing.

When He entered the house of Zacheus, he said simply: "Today salvation has come to this house." (Luke 19:9)

When He came to the house of Simon and Andrew, and saw that Simon Peter's mother-in-law was ill, He immediately healed her.

In the village of Bethany, where He often stayed with His friends, Lazarus and Mary and Martha, He brought such grace to this family that all three of its members became saints.

Peace to this house!

This was the greeting Christ wished His disciples to use in entering a home. Any family that sincerely invites Christ to reside under its roof has title to peace beyond all of the world's giving.

Consecrating the home and family to the Sacred Heart is a well-established way of signifying this invitation. It places the family where it should be, in the arms and heart of Christ; and it places Christ where He should be, in the intimate life and affection of the family.

There is a special title for this family consecration. It is called the Enthronement of the Sacred Heart in the Home. As the word suggests, this act means the acceptance of Christ as true Lord and Master of the household, to be loved and venerated as such by all the members of the family.

Here is a simple explanation of how to go about this enthronement.

You will need, first of all, a suitable, large framed picture of the Sacred Heart. Then a time should be arranged with your pastor or one of his assistants for the ceremony of consecration. The enthronement must take place in the home itself; it consists in the blessing of the picture and then hanging it on the wall in a conspicuous place of honor. The priest then leads the family in a consecration of the home to the loving heart of Christ.

A paperback book of 380 pages, called *Enthronement of the Sacred Heart*, is available for 50 cents at the Catechetical Guild, 260 Summit Ave., St. Paul 2, Minn. This book, by Father Francis Larkin, S.S.CC., National Director of the Enthronement of the Sacred Heart in the Home, provides a comprehensive discussion of the subject, together with suitable prayers and ceremonies.

WHAT special obligations do you take upon yourself in accepting the enthronement? Actually there are none that bind in conscience over and above the Christian and Catholic duties which are part of your state in life. There are, however, some very beautiful practices which are highly recommended as a means of proving to Christ your sincere love and devotion.

Family Communion is a practice which should spring naturally from devotion to the Sacred Heart. Increasingly this is becoming a common practice on Sundays. Some families try also to receive Communion together on the First Friday, a day especially marked out by Christ in His revelations to St. Margaret Mary.

In many homes the family rosary is said each evening before the picture of the Sacred Heart and the picture of His mother which should hang nearby. At regular intervals the father as head of the house should lead in the prayer of consecration to the Sacred Heart. This could be joined to the rosary and made part of the family night prayer.

Here too should be mentioned the practice of night adoration in the home. This devotion was launched in 1927 by Father Mateo, a great apostle of the Sacred Heart. It was part of his campaign to sanctify the family and so help to re-establish the social reign of the Sacred Heart in the world.

This devotion is distinct from the enthronement, although naturally it often accompanies it. It is intended primarily for the more generous individuals or families. They are invit-

ed to answer our Lord's request to "watch one hour" with Him at night between 9 p.m. and 6 a.m. once a month in the home. No special prayers are necessary. It is suggested that night adorers unite themselves with the priests celebrating Mass in various parts of the world, using a missal for this purpose. The rosary may be said, or other prayers in keeping with the spirit of adoration and reparation.

According to the National Center of the Enthronement, there are more than 200,000 night adorers in the United States, and a million throughout the world. Here is truly a powerful instrument in saving the world's homes. Those interested can find complete information in the book on enthronement referred to previously in this article.

SIMPLICITY and informality should be the keynote of family prayer to the Sacred Heart. But sincere and practical devotion along the lines suggested here surely will entitle the family to profit by the wonderful promises made by Christ to St. Margaret Mary:

I will bless every dwelling in which an image of My Sacred Heart shall be exposed and honored.

I will establish peace in their families.

I will give them all the graces necessary for their state in life.

I will console them in all their difficulties.

I will be their refuge during life, and especially at the hour of death.

A great reward, indeed, for a small sacrifice.

MARRIAGE FRAUDS

This is my problem!

TWO months ago my daughter married a man who had given us the impression that he had a lot of money. He drove a flashy car, took her to nice places and wore expensive clothes. Now we find that he doesn't have much money at all, has an ordinary job, and was only putting on a show. I have been telling my daughter that she should get the marriage annulled on the grounds of fraud. Am I right?

What should I do?

Hugh J. O'Connell, C.S.S.R.

SOLUTION: Although I understand your maternal solicitude for your daughter, I must declare very firmly that it is your duty to cease immediately trying to influence your daughter to leave her husband. On the grounds that you allege, there is not the ghost of a chance that the marriage can be annulled or dissolved by the Church.

It is true that your daughter might be able to procure a decree of annulment in a civil court on the grounds of fraud; but this civil decree would not dissolve the marriage bond and would have no validity in the eyes of God or of the Church.

Of course, it is possible that there are other valid grounds for having the marriage declared null, such as the existence of an invalidating impediment; but your letter gives no clue to any such grounds. The fact that you and your daughter thought the man

she was marrying was richer than he really proved to be is certainly insufficient.

Only those errors of judgment invalidate a marriage which concern: 1) the very nature of the marriage contract; 2) the actual identity of the person whom one is marrying; or 3) by Church law a condition of true slavery which is unknown to the free partner. Since this third point has no application in our society, we will omit further discussion of it.

For any contract to be binding, both parties must be aware of the substantial nature of the contract. If one of the parties, for instance, thinks he is buying a house, and the other party thinks he is selling a horse, there is no meeting of minds and hence no valid contract. In the case of marriage, each of the parties must know that marriage is a permanent society between a man

and woman for the procreation of children through some kind of bodily union. It is not necessary that they know the precise details by which procreation is effected.

Secondly, a mistake about the actual identity of the person whom one is marrying would invalidate the marriage. If Tom thinks he is marrying Rita, whereas it is her identical twin Anita who has slipped in and gone through the marriage ceremony in her sister's place, the marriage would be invalid. Note that this must be a mistake, not merely about a name, but about the actual person whom one intends to marry.

However, a mistake about *a quality* of the person whom one marries does not invalidate the marriage. Mary, for instance, might think that John is 28 years old, the boss of his company, that he has a fine set of teeth and black curly hair. However, John is 42, a clerk, has false teeth and wears a wig. All these mistaken judgments on her part are concerned with qualities, or accidental attributes, which she supposes John to possess. But the fact remains that she is still getting John, though not quite as dazzling a creature as she expected.

On the other hand, John might believe that his bride is a good cook, the daughter of a wealthy man, and possessed of two sound legs. Whereas she doesn't know how to cook at all, comes from a poor family, and has a wooden leg. These again are mistakes concerning qualities of the person and do not invalidate the marriage contract.

The reasoning behind this principle is clear. If an error concerning the qualities of a person were considered sufficient to invalidate the marriage, practically any marriage could after a

lapse of time be attacked as invalid and dissolved. For in almost every case such mistakes of judgment are made with regard to the qualities of the bride or husband-to-be. It doesn't take very long for the bride to learn that her new husband is not the gallant knight in shining armor that she thought him to be in the days of the courtship. And at the same time the husband discovers that his wife is not the lovely perfect angel that she seemed as she knelt beside him at the altar on the wedding day. He is a man; she is a woman. Both have their personal faults.

That is why each repeats in the wedding ceremony: "I take thee for my lawful husband (wife), to have and to hold, from this day forward, for better, for worse, for richer, for poorer, in sickness and in health, until death do us part."

The time of preparation for marriage is when the financial standing, the personal qualities, and general desirability of each of the partners should be discovered. After marriage it is too late. Each has to make the best of the bargain that has been entered.

Your daughter married this man. Quite certainly this marriage was valid. You had better do all you can to help them make their marriage successful. If you try to influence her to leave her husband, you will be most probably condemning her to a lonely life, placing her in danger of later on entering an invalid marriage, and imperiling the salvation of her soul.

SAYS THE COACH

Another reason why a girl can't catch a ball like a man is because a man is so much bigger and easier to catch.

Irish Digest

THE LIGUORIAN

Your Bodies Are

This is not a wild idea or a pious exaggeration. St. Paul first heard about it when he was knocked off his horse.

Members of Christ!

PATRICK KALER, C.S.S.R.

ONE day our divine Saviour cured a beggar who had been blind from birth. He did it in a rather unusual way. He picked up a bit of dirt from the ground and, mixing it with His saliva, He made little mud packs and placed them on the sightless eyes of the blind man. Then He told him to go wash his eyes in the pool of Siloe. A strange way of acting, we might think. He could have cured the man by a word or a breath or simply by an act of His will. To work such a brilliant miracle as bringing sight to eyes that had never seen, why should the omnipotent God use the ordinary clay of the earth?

But does not our Saviour frequently use created things to carry out His work? In fact, His very body and soul, His human will and intellect,

were created things. He, a divine Person, was using them as instruments to carry out the greatest work of all — the redemption. We were redeemed by the separation of His body and soul in death.

We know, however, that His body and soul did not stay separated or remain here on earth. He reunited them in His resurrection and took them to heaven in His ascension. But God's basic plan was unchanged. He still intended to bring redemption to men through some created means, some created instrument which would always be present in this world.

God did not have to plan it that way, just as Christ did not have to use the clay at His feet. That is the way His infinite wisdom decided it would be. He decided to place on earth some instrument through which He could do this redemptive work.

He wanted an instrument actually able to do the things that the human nature of Christ had done before the ascension. It would be an instrument through which our Lord could enlighten the minds, move the wills, and touch the hearts of men — something through which Christ could visibly teach, govern, and sanctify.

So in place of the body which ascended into heaven, He formed *another body*, one that would remain in the world. Through it He could bring redemption to men of every nation and age. We call this body the Mystical Body of Christ. Another name for it is the Catholic Church.

Consider what has been stated. Note the parallel comparison: just as the Divine Word used His physical body, together with His whole human nature, as His chief instrument on earth in the work of the redemption, so, after His ascension, Christ uses here on earth His Mystical Body, the Catholic Church, as His outstanding instrument to bring redemption to mankind. That is a remarkable statement. If it seems in any way novel to you, then up to now you have probably thought of the Church as many other people do.

The majority of Catholics do not realize what the above statement means. If they did and acted accordingly, they would be a thing of wonder in the world. So read on, even if you remember having "covered" the Mystical Body in your religion classes. It is a doctrine of such richness that each insight reveals new "usable" knowledge for your life.

IT IS especially important to read on if you find flitting about your mind such thoughts as, "This is no doubt a pious exaggeration." Or, "Father means well, but where did he ever get such wild ideas?" Father got these wild ideas from another father of some nineteen centuries past — St. Paul. St. Paul did not make them up either. It was not something that he formulated from hazy philosophizing and put forth hesitantly. It came to him like a bolt of lightning and branded his soul with the certitude that *God had spoken*. You cannot be ambiguous about being knocked off a horse. Lying there stunned on the Damascus road, St. Paul learned his first lesson about Christianity from Christ's own lips: "I am Jesus Whom you persecute!" (Acts 9:5)

Paul had been persecuting a group of people called *Christians* and now Jesus tells him that what he was doing was the same as persecuting Jesus Himself. Come what might — being shipwrecked, scourged, imprisoned, stoned — nothing would equal the memory of that first fall and of that brilliantly lucid message. From now on it would be the rhythm of his redirected zeal, the heartbeat in all his preaching.

I am Jesus Whom you persecute. Somehow Christ and His Church are one. There is some organic relationship between Christ and Christians. *Know you not that your bodies are members of Christ?* (I Cor. 6:15) St. Paul asked that question, and he repeated that truth over and over in various ways. *We being many are*

one body in Christ. (Rom. 12:5) *You are all one in Christ Jesus.* (Gal. 3:28) *Christ is the Head of the body of the Church.* (Col. 1:18)

The early Christian writers took it up after that. They spoke of the divine Redeemer and His social body as constituting one mystical person. Frequently the theme appears in the writings of those early theologians we call *the Fathers*. One of them, St. Augustine, speaks of the Christ-Church unit as the "whole Christ."

But it was not until the ninth century that the adjective *mystical* was officially linked to the noun *body*, and the combination was accepted as an appropriate and useful term for the unique reality. *Mystical* pointed to the aura of mystery which surrounded the reality. Because of that we will not be able to understand it completely. *Mystical* also served to distinguish this body from His physical body which was born of the Virgin Mary, walked the streets of Jerusalem, and hung upon the cross.

On the other hand, the Mystical Body is not merely a group of people working together, like the PTA, nor a team, like the St. Louis Cardinals, nor an organization, like the Ford Motor Company. These are all called "moral bodies." The Mystical Body is neither a moral body nor a physical body. It is a unique body, full of mystery, but nonetheless a reality with a life of its own.

THE presence of a soul distinguishes a living thing from a non-living thing. The Mystical Body has a soul. It is the Third Person of the Blessed Trinity, the Holy Spirit. The

life of this Mystical Body is what we call sanctifying grace. To think that our own familiar Catholic Church is this marvelous thing before which the angels never cease to wonder!

But we know that many who are a little less than the angels do not share this angelic viewpoint. Perhaps even our most charitable critics consider the Catholic Church as little more than a highly organized society in which a remote, almost impersonal, authority, called the hierarchy, tells the members what their duties are. The Church is indeed a visible society of pope, bishops, priests, and laity. But do not stop there. It is more than that. It is not only an organization but also an organism — an organism which lives with the same kind of life as that of Christ.

Because some people do not know that, they hesitate to embrace the Catholic faith. They are afraid that the big efficient organization of the Catholic Church will come between them and Christ. Just as they are right to feel that their personal relationship to Christ is very precious, so they are wrong to think that the Church will be such an obstacle. The opposite is true. The Church is the very source of our union with Christ. Baptism makes us members of Christ's Mystical Body. What could be more personal than that? "Can a man hate his own body?" asks St. Paul. (Eph. 5:29)

There is a living relationship between ourselves and Jesus. Just as branches get their life from the vine, so our supernatural life comes from Christ. Christ is the cause of the

grace in our souls. Our union with Christ is so close, so intimate, that we have the same kind of life. Moreover, our Lord acts through us to bring salvation to mankind. We are His living instruments in the world.

Not that there is not a human side to the Church. That has been painfully obvious to all from the beginning. As Monsignor Robert Hugh Benson put it: "Every man has on his lips, and may some day give, the kiss of Judas." The Catholic Church has always been visibly the household of saints and sinners. There is little danger that we will forget it. But there is a likelihood that we will forget — or not realize — the divine side of the Church, which is not visible. It takes faith to see that Christ is acting — present tense, not past — is acting in the world today through the members of His Mystical Body, which means you and me, human as we are.

The poet Francis Thompson has a poem called *The Kingdom of Heaven* whose closing lines are:

"And lo, Christ walking on the water

Not of Genesareth, but Thames!"

The poetic vision pictured Christ in the modern world, but it takes supernatural faith to grasp, as Father Rickaby says, that "the Catholic Church is simply an extension of the incarnation."

ANOTHER theologian, Father Moehler, states it with equal emphasis: "Thus the visible Church, from the point of view here taken, is the Son of God Himself, everlastingly manifesting Himself among men

in a human form, perpetually renovated, and eternally young — the permanent incarnation of the Son of God."

To believe this mystery requires nothing less than a Paul-like faith. But, after all, do we not make the Church an object of faith in the Apostles' Creed: "I believe in . . . the holy Catholic Church?"

Part of this belief is that the Church is eternally young. It must be. Christ is the contemporary of every man born into this world. *Jesus Christ is the same, yesterday and today, yes, and forever.* (Heb. 13:8) The Church to which Christ said, "I am with you all days, even unto the consummation of the world," (Matt. 28:20) cannot be some rusty relic of the middle ages. It is alive and active and, by vocation, in touch with the future.

The Church is the community of those who have in their souls the life of Christ and are working together in preparation for the second coming of Christ when He will lead them in triumph to heaven. Until that great day the Church must exercise its world-wide apostolate, preaching the good news of the Gospel to every creature. As St. Augustine says, "Christ preaches Christ." The Catholic Church is the new people of God entrusted with the noble mission of allowing Christ to bring salvation through them to all mankind. What a glorious privilege to be a member of this Mystical Body!

(The second and concluding article on the Mystical Body will appear in the July issue of LIGUORIAN.)



Pre-marriage Clinic



Is Epilepsy a Bar to Marriage?

Donald F. Miller, C.S.S.R.

PROBLEM: Please answer a question for me. Occasionally when I am under prolonged stress or strain, I am subject to epileptic seizures. This may happen once a year, or again three or four years may elapse with no recurrence. A relative has told certain friends of mine that the Catholic Church would not permit me to marry while I was subject to such a malady. I may add that it has never hindered me from pursuing legitimate employment. If medical statistics are correct, several million people in the United States suffer from this handicap and many of them are married. Is it true that the Catholic Church denies the right to marry to those of us in that category?

SOLUTION: There is no law of the Catholic Church that bars persons who have occasional epileptic seizures from marriage. However, certain principles of the natural law must be taken into consideration before one who has even infrequent epileptic seizures decides to marry.

Medical science distinguishes between different types of epilepsy, and, though this is one of those fields in which it has not been able to come up with all the answers, it is able to determine that certain forms of this dis-

ease can be transmitted to children. If a thorough physical examination made by competent physicians were to establish great probability that a person would have defective children, and if the person in question were capable of having children, this finding would raise a serious conscience question as to whether marriage should be entered.

The degree of probability of having defective children would have to be carefully gauged. If the diagnosis produced a judgment of physicians that there would be only slight probability that the disease would be transmitted to children, it could be ignored. The firmer the judgment and the greater the scientific probability of defective children, the more it should make a person hesitate to marry.

A second principle of the natural law dictates that one who suffers from epileptic seizures is bound to make this fact known to the man who asks her to marry him. The same principle applies to a man similarly afflicted who asks a woman to marry him. It can readily be seen that to conceal this fact before marriage and then to have it burst suddenly on one's partner after marriage, would make living together in peace most difficult. Justice demands that serious personal facts of this nature be

made known to a partner before the contract of marriage is solemnized.

In revealing such a fact, all the mitigating circumstances may of course be told. These would include the opinion of a good doctor that the condition is not grave; the fact of the infrequency of the seizures; the now well-established fact that there are medications available that in many cases prevent seizures from taking place; the proven ability of the person to lead a life of normal activity.

While from a natural and worldly viewpoint this may seem a difficult program for one who suffers in any way from epileptic seizures, there is the spiritual viewpoint that alone can bring comfort and peace. God sends no cross to any of his children without providing abundant graces for carrying that cross. Every cross God does send to an individual is designed to lead that person closer to Him. Acceptance of these principles makes any cross easier to bear.

LONG TERM INVESTMENT

In this life men lose sleep, are anxious and worried about amassing this or that; they want bigger houses, larger incomes, higher social status; they wish to make a great name for themselves in their countries and neighborhoods so that people will speak of them after they are dead. It is not for me to condemn such, but neither do I commend. For, according to St. Paul, a man should use the things of this world as though he used them not; possess them as though he owned them not; for the manner of this world lasts for so short a time. I beg you, for the love of God our Lord, work with might and main to gain treasure in heaven; to win a great name there and strive to live in the memory of Him Who must one day judge us.

St. Ignatius of Loyola

PRAYER BEFORE CRUCIFIX

O Jesus, beloved of my soul, I kiss You, nailed to the cross!

I promise that my mouth, which kisses Your sacred wounds, will never again wilfully give way to backbiting, complaints, or any words displeasing to You.

I promise that my eyes, which see Your blood and tears flowing for my sins, will no longer look upon the vanities of the world, or anything that may tempt me to offend You; that my ears, which hear with so much consolation the seven words You spoke from the cross, will no longer take pleasure in vain praises, useless conversations, or words that wound charity; that my mind, after having studied with love the mystery of the cross, will no longer let in vain or bad thoughts and imaginations.

I promise that nothing will enter or leave my heart unless it be marked with the beauty of Your cross, which I will make upon myself with love and reverence when I begin my day, as soon as I awake, and when the day is ended, and I go to sleep.

St. Francis de Sales

Unspectacular Saint

St. Catherine Labouré

DAVID L. POLEK, C.S.S.R.

A POULTRY yard, an illiterate peasant girl, a dozen old men! Could these produce a saint?

It doesn't seem likely, we might be inclined to say. Saints usually call to mind great deeds, sublime ecstasies, high dignities. People become saints who are great mystics, like St. Theresa, or outstanding popes, like St. Pius X, or crowd-swaying missionaries, like St. Alphonsus.

Many saints are indeed great in this sense. They leave impressive accomplishments behind them. But there is another important kind of sanctity which cannot be overlooked. Some saints are little known, commonplace people, who forge sanctity out of their ordinariness. Living quiet lives close to God, they rival the most famous of God's honored men and women.

St. Catherine Labouré is such a saint. France was her homeland, and the hidden life of a housekeeping nun was God's plan for her life. She had her great moments; she was honored

with several visions of the Blessed Mother. Then came the commonplace years — 46 years of prosaic, routine duties. They were not in the least out of the ordinary, but they produced in Catherine what God wanted — a perfect conformity to His will. Out of a vision, a poultry yard and some old men, God formed a saint worthy of our admiration and our imitation as well.

Zoe Labouré (the *Catherine* came later) was born in 1806. Her parents were of sturdy peasant stock. Childhood memories were shared with ten other children. In 1815 the mother died when Catherine was eight years old, and (probably because she was kept at home to help with the household duties) she had no schooling — never learned to read or write. When she was twelve she took over the entire management of the household.

Catherine was powerfully drawn to prayer and the things of religion, but she bided her time. Finally, at the

age of twenty-four, she sought admission to St. Vincent de Paul's Daughters of Charity, and was received as a candidate. Catherine now began her preparation for convent life.

St. Vincent de Paul and St. Louise de Marillac had instilled three distinctive traits in their religious societies: simplicity, cordiality and cheerfulness. These traits Catherine set out to acquire.

AT THE time of Catherine's arrival at her convent, all minds and hearts of the Vincentians and the Daughters of Charity were turned toward a great event. The remains of St. Vincent de Paul were being returned to Paris after being hidden during the French Revolution. Catherine prayed often before the relics of St. Vincent. During a novena of thanksgiving for the return of the holy relics, she had the first of several visions. As she told her confessor, it seemed to her that she saw the heart of St. Vincent. As might be expected, her confessor remained sceptical. Of Catherine he later set down his opinion as follows: "Neither in intelligence nor in judgment is she outstanding."

Who would expect the flower of sanctity to grow in such soil?

A few months later, on July 18, Catherine was awakened in the middle of the night by a "shining child" who led her to the sisters' chapel. There our Lady appeared and talked to her in the most familiar terms, telling her of a difficult task she would be asked to perform.

On November 27, 1830, she saw the Blessed Virgin once again in the convent chapel. Catherine described Mary after the vision: "She was of middle height, wearing a silk robe white as the glow of dawn. A long veil was on her head and extended to her feet. Her face was uncovered, but it was so beautiful that I could not describe it."

There were two phases to this important apparition. In the first, Catherine saw the Blessed Virgin standing on a globe, which represented the earth. Rays of light came from her hands, illustrating the graces that Mary showers upon those who ask for them. Then the vision changed, and Catherine saw the Blessed Virgin as though surrounded by an oval frame. Around the upper portion of the frame were these words: *O Mary, conceived without sin, pray for us who have recourse to thee!* Now the picture reversed itself, and the young novice saw in the oval frame a capital M, with a cross above it and two hearts, one thorn-crowned, the other pierced with a sword. Catherine seemed to hear a voice telling her to have a medal struck representing these things. All who wore this medal would receive great graces by Mary's intercession.

At first her confessors and superiors discounted completely the reality of Catherine's vision. But when in June of 1832 the first medals were made, it was a clear achievement of God's providence. Nothing could resist the power of the Miraculous Medal, a name which arose from the

remarkable circumstances of its origin. Through the years, however, it has, by its effectiveness, proved its right to this remarkable title.

PRELIMINARY canonical inquiries resulted in a favorable decision as to the authenticity of Catherine's visions. The medal itself rapidly grew in popularity. This was true especially after 1842, when by its means, Alphonse Ratisbonne, a bitterly anti-Catholic Jew, was suddenly converted.

But what, meanwhile, of Catherine Labouré, the novice?

Her life presents a strange paradox. She had her brief moment of glory, and then she retired so completely into the shadows that nothing the world would call noteworthy ever happened to her again. She obeyed our Lady in making known the Miraculous Medal, but she did this with a perfect passion for anonymity so that her connection with the remarkable events was known only to her immediate superiors.

For forty years she was cook and seamstress at a hospice of the Daughters of Charity. Here Sister Catherine filled out her day in caring for about 30 aged men, residents of the place. She might also have been seen, now and then, in the poultry yard looking after the chickens.

Nobody in her community knew that she was the favored one of God, the novice who had seen the Blessed Mother. She lived her life among her aged charges, serving them as a loving daughter would serve a venerated father. Catherine in her occasional

free moments could always be found in the chapel before the Blessed Sacrament and the statue of the Blessed Virgin.

HOW close was she to God? There is a deep mystery about her life that may never be unfolded. Pope Pius XII called her the "saint of silence" when he canonized her. Her humility was unchallenged throughout her life, and she once said to her superior: "I knew nothing; I was nothing. For this reason God chose me."

Her death came as quietly as most of her life had passed. The office of portress was her last appointment at the convent, and she spent the days before her death saying her rosary. Almost her last words were an appeal to say the rosary well. She died on January 1, 1876, peacefully, quietly, humbly, as she had lived.

After her death no one even attempted a beginning of the canonization process. Superiors spoke of her as "rather insignificant," "matter-of-fact or unexcitable." How, they thought, could such an ordinary existence be held up to the admiration of the Christian world? Not until twenty years after her death was her cause introduced. But God wished the saint to emerge from her chosen obscurity. Her cause advanced beyond all expectations. She was beatified in 1933 and canonized by Pope Pius XII in 1947.

A very ordinary person was Catherine Labouré, but a very extraordinary servant of God and our Lady. Catherine is a perfect example of a

saint for the little people, the very ordinary people. It was not the visions of our Lady that canonized her. These were an incident apart. It was the 46 years following the apparitions that made her a saint, the years of quiet, humble everyday

work. It is the everyday tasks that can sanctify you. Why not take St. Catherine Labouré as your model? She had thirty old men, some chickens and a few cooking pots to start with. What do you have to help you become a saint?

LOVE OF SOULS

Jesus Christ loved souls, and He bequeathed this love to us as the very heart of Christianity. No real Christian, no loving Christian, can be without some of this love; it runs in our veins like the very blood of Christ. As soon as we love, in youth or in old age, as husband or as father, as son or as friend, we want to save the one we love; that is, we want to give that soul — at the price of our own life if need be — truth through faith, virtue through grace, peace through redemption, in one word, God: God known, God loved, God served. This is the love of souls that is superadded to all other affections; and, far from destroying them, it heightens and transforms them, giving them a divine quality, however natural they may be in themselves.

Lacordaire



CALLS THEE BY NAME

God beholds me individually, whoever I am. He "calls thee by thy name." He sees me, and understands me, as He made me. He knows what is in me, all my own peculiar feelings and thoughts, my dispositions and likings, my strength and my weakness. He views me in my day of rejoicing and my day of sorrow. He sympathizes in my hopes and my temptations. He interests Himself in all my anxieties and remembrances, all the risings and fallings of my spirit. He has numbered the very hairs of my head and the cubits of my stature. He compasses me round and bears me in His arms; He takes me up and sets me down. He notes my very countenance, whether smiling or in tears, whether healthful or sickly. He looks tenderly upon my hands and my feet; He hears my voice, the beating of my heart, and my very breathing. I do not love myself better than He loves me. I cannot shrink from pain more than He dislikes my bearing it; and if He puts it on me, it is as I wilt put it on myself, if I am wise, for a greater good afterwards. . . .

Cardinal Newman: "Heart to Heart"



Thoughts for the Shut-in

Leonard F. Hyland, C.S.S.R.

Show Yourself to the Priest!

THE disease of leprosy was much more common in the time of Christ than it is today. In the Gospels several instances are recorded in which lepers sought out Christ, and were healed by Him. The story of His cure of ten lepers, and the ingratitude of nine of them, is familiar to Catholics. It forms the Mass Gospel for the thirteenth Sunday after Pentecost.

Here we are concerned with one sentence in this Gospel story. After Christ had cured the lepers, He said to them: "Go show yourselves to the priests." (Luke 17:14)

This same admonition is found in another miracle worked by Christ on behalf of a leper. St. Matthew, St. Mark, and St. Luke all record this particular event. Here is St. Matthew's account:

"And behold, a leper came up and worshipped Him, saying, 'Lord, if Thou wilt, Thou canst make me clean.' And stretching forth His hand, Jesus touched him, saying, 'I will; be thou made clean.' And immediately his leprosy was cleansed. And Jesus said to him, 'See thou tell no one; but go, show thyself to the priest, and offer the gift that Moses commanded, for a witness to them.'" (Matthew 8:1-4)

According to Old Testament law, leprosy involved uncleanness. It is not that there was necessarily a moral stigma attached to it, but the disease was considered to be contagious, and the lepers were driven away from the towns

and villages and became veritable outcasts. If a cure was claimed, a rite of purification had to be undergone. This rite had a religious significance, but it was also a means by which the priests, as leaders of the community, could assure themselves that the leper could live among his fellow human beings once more without being a source of danger to them.

It was this law that Christ had reference to in admonishing the lepers He cured to present themselves to the priests, that their cure might be certified.

But another lesson can be drawn from this fact by all shut-ins. "Go show yourself to the priest" is good advice for anyone who is chronically ill, or whose illness is serious. In God's providence the priest has been made the instrument of many graces. He administers the sacraments of penance and the last anointing. He offers up Mass, and he alone can bring the Eucharistic Saviour through the streets to the shut-in's home. His blessing and his prayers bring special help from God.

The Catholic who is confined to his home by illness of any kind for a long period of time, and who neglects to inform his parish priest of this, is missing out on much of the help and strength which could be his to carry the cross of illness courageously, and even to find improvement in his health, if this be God's will.



POINTED PARAGRAPHS

Swim with Care

With the approach of summer and vacation time, it might be well to issue a reminder having to do with the hazards of the healthful exercise of swimming. The National Safety Council has some rather grim statistics and some helpful suggestions.

As the Safety Council points out, virtually every major adult summer sport centers around the water, and swimming itself is almost universally enjoyed. More than 30 million Americans enjoy this sport, sometimes in the nation's estimated 250,000 swimming pools, more often in rivers, lakes and ponds.

Here is the grim note: about 2300 Americans drown annually swimming or playing in the water. One out of 15 fatal accidents is a drowning.

Reasonable caution is in order here, and these suggestions of the Safety Council should be carefully noted and acted upon:

1. Learn to swim.
2. Be sociable — never swim alone.
3. Stick to the beaches with life-guards around. Look before you leap. Don't swim or dive in unfamiliar waters.
4. Know your limitations. Don't swim so long you become tired, overheated or chilled. Take it easy.
5. Don't swim right after eating. Give your meal time to digest.

6. Don't rebel if your muscles cramp — relax for a moment in a face-down float and massage the muscle.

7. Swim parallel to shore if you want to test your endurance.

Young Adults

Some months ago the *LIGUORIAN* had something to say about the importance of organizations for unmarried adults. A number of letters reached us from members of such organizations in all parts of the country. We later published a compilation of these letters under the heading "Unmarried and Unfrustrated."

We are happy in this connection to make mention of the third annual convention of the Young Adult Catholic Clubs of the South. This convention is scheduled to take place July 7, 8 and 9 at the Hilton Granada Hotel, San Antonio, Texas. It is the hope of the general committee of this year's convention that the meeting will take on a national aspect, with representatives of all fifty states in attendance.

Last year's convention of the Young Adult Clubs in New Orleans saw some 550 delegates registered. At that time steps were taken toward giving the organization a national status. The sponsors hope that these plans can soon be brought to completion.

The Young Adult Catholics of Galveston County, Texas, serve as the founding group of the convention movement. Information concerning the convention and the young adult Catholic movement may be obtained by writing to the Young Adult Catholics of Galveston County, 1328 Ursuline, Galveston, Texas.

Apostolic Opportunity

Many doors are opening today for young people who feel a sincere urge to work in a special way for God's cause in the world. From time to time we have listed in these pages the various groups which offer opportunities for lay apostles both at home and in other countries.

Well-known among these lay apostle groups is the Grail Movement. Its purpose is to alert and to equip young women for the fulfillment of lay missionary work, both in the United States and in the tremendously important areas of Latin America, Asia and Africa. Grailville has already placed many young women in responsible positions; many more are needed for the proper fulfillment of the Church's work in the world.

Each summer Grailville offers summer sessions for young women, designed to enlarge their perspective on woman's apostolic capabilities. Outstanding lecturers are brought in for these three study weeks.

Here are the scheduled programs for summer, 1961:

June 10-18: *Woman's Role in the Professions* — Dr. Karl Stern

July 21-28: *Mankind's Unity, Our Responsibility* — Rev. Jean Danielou

June, 1961

August 5-13: *The Person and the Community* — Rev. Dr. Josef Goldbrunner.

Other opportunities, including a retreat at Grailville in late August, are offered to interested young women. We are happy to give publicity to this worthy work, and we hope that it will attract the attention even of some who perhaps have hitherto never given much thought to their apostolic obligations.

For further information as to content of the summer courses, travel and tuition, write to Miss Anne Mulkeen, Grailville, Loveland, Ohio.

Christian Marriage

When a man and a woman who have been baptized, contract to marry, it is no longer a contract between man and woman but between a son and a daughter of God.

God is interested; two of His children are marrying; so interested that He Himself joins their hands and dares anyone to put them asunder; so interested that if God is not invited to participate in the marriage, there is no marriage.

Do understand this. The sacrament of matrimony is not just an extra, a pious afterthought of the Church who wants the contracting parties to feel nice and holy when they join hands in holy matrimony; a pious addition like rosary beads dangling from the hands of the bride.

The sacrament is everything; no sacrament, no marriage. Two hands are joined but they are not ordinary hands. They are the hands of the children of God. They cannot be joined unless the hand of their Father

er is laid on them.—*Bishop Murphy, Shrewsbury, England*

Poisoned Journalism

There are many pens which are being guided not by any love for wisdom or culture or truth in what they write but rather by the unhealthy flame that comes from certain passions, and by an uncontrolled desire for publicity and money that remains deaf to the pleas of conscience that it can never completely silence.

Can it ever be right to go ahead and take details and descriptions that ought to be reserved for scientific police studies and for the courts and throw them out to satisfy idle curiosity? Is it ever right to take every possible kind of criminal act, including those that ought to be cloaked with a veil of silence, and use them as an occasion for descriptions and detailed accounts that amount to nothing more or less than a training course in crime and an incentive to vice? This kind of public disclosure, which seems to follow a vicious set of rules all its own, has reached proportions that are so alarming and so frightening (in certain fields in particular) that the only possible explanation for it is that a deliberate attempt is being made to make violent impressions on the senses and force an entry into minds, with no thought of the wounds that are thereby being inflicted on the soul. — *Pope John XXIII — The Pope Speaks*

Attention, Teens!

Teen-ager! Jesus Himself, the Divine Teacher, looked on this precious and wonderful age with special love.

The subject of teen-agers turns up again and again in the Gospel, each time with a slightly different lilt to it, as though it carried a new air and aroma with it that brought those pages to life and made them unforgettable.

At one moment, it is a call to complete generosity, as when Jesus invites the young man to leave everything to follow Him, and looks into his eyes and shows His affection for him: *Looking upon him, He loved him.*

At other times, it is a powerful command to rise, that snatches from death two who are in the flower of youth and restores them to life; and it is all the more moving to realize that two of the three commands to rise recorded in the Gospel are addressed — in almost identical words — to two youngsters. To the daughter of Jairus, Jesus says: "*Talitha cumi*," which means, "Girl, I say to thee, arise!" To the son of the widow of Naim: "Young man, I say to thee, arise!"

On another occasion, it is an invitation to share in His work, a kind of preview and foretaste of Catholic Action in its role of cooperating with the sacred hierarchy: as a matter of fact, in the miracle of the multiplication of bread, it was a young boy who gave our Lord the few loaves and the fish that were needed for His divine plan. — *Pope John XXIII*

The Good Sport

Education in sport should aim at developing in the young the virtues proper to an athlete. These virtues are, among others, loyalty that ex-

cludes taking refuge in subterfuge; docility and obedience to the wise commands of the director charged with the training of the team; the spirit of self-renunciation when one has to fade into the background in order that the interests of the team may thereby be furthered; loyalty to a pledge undertaken; serenity in defeat; modesty in victory; patience toward spectators, who are not always moderate; justice, if the competitive sport is bound up with financial interests and voluntary agreements; and, in general, chastity and temperance already recommended by the ancients themselves.

These virtues, proper and necessary for the athlete in whatever sport he engages, are taken from an address of Pope Pius XII, who had a great fondness for athletes. They are virtues which, although they are called for in the field of physical and external activity, are genuine Christian virtues; and they cannot be exercised in an outstanding degree without a deep religious spirit and, we would add, without frequent recourse to prayer.

It might be helpful to put some of these points in the form of a questionnaire.

Have I supported my team or athletic group loyally, but at the same time not confusing loyalty with deceit by using dishonesty or cheating in order to win a victory?

As a team member, have I been willing to follow the training rules and to obey the coach, whose responsibility it is to prepare the team for the contest?

Have I allowed myself to be temperamental or to develop something of a prima donna outlook, so that I am hurt and chagrined if passed by, or sulky or insubordinate if I am not allowed to shine?

In the event of personal accomplishment or team victory, have I tried to conduct myself with honest humility, or have I developed into that distasteful specimen — a good athlete who is also a braggart and a snob?

If, after putting forth my very best effort, I nevertheless must taste defeat, do I manage to preserve a certain calmness and largeheartedness even in these trying circumstances?

Spectators at sports events can sometimes be ill-mannered, resentful and petty; do I try nevertheless to be patient in the face of their heckling or fickleness?

Have I lived up strictly to contracts I have made for my athletic services? Has a sense of justice excluded any thought of "throwing a game" or not giving my best effort at all times?

While playing hard, have I made it a point of honor to play fair?

SEEDS OF TROUBLE

Ordinarily it is not so much violent anger as it is petty impatience which causes us trouble. Peevishness, sulkiness, seeking petty revenge, snapping at people unreasonably—these are common faults—and how often they breed trouble!

LIGUORIANA



The Practice of the Love of Jesus Christ

Chapter X—Love of God Is Not Ambitious

By St. Alphonsus Liguori

Translated by

C. D. McEnniry, C.S.S.R.

HE WHO loves Jesus Christ desires nothing but Jesus Christ.

Whoever loves Jesus Christ does not look for the esteem and love of men; his only desire is to be pleasing to God, Who is the only object of his love.

St. Hilary says that worldly honor is the devil's stock in trade. How true that is! For the enemy is driving a bargain for hell whenever he succeeds in planting in a soul a hankering after esteem; because that soul, by losing humility, exposes itself to the greatest evils. St. James writes: "God resists the proud and gives His grace to the humble." (James 4:6) "Resists the proud," that is, He does not even listen to their prayers; and among the acts of pride surely this is one: to go looking for popularity and to be puffed up when you gain it.

We have a terrifying example in the case of the Franciscan Friar Giustino. He had reached an exalted degree of contemplation, but because he had a secret desire to be esteemed by the world, see how he ended. One day Pope Eugene IV sent for him and, on account of his reputation for

sanctity, received him with the highest honors, embraced him and made him sit beside him. Friar Giustino was vain as a peacock after his reception at the papal palace, so much so that St. John Capistrano said to him: "Ah, Friar Giustino, you went there an angel, but you came back a devil." In fact, growing in pride from day to day and railing against anybody who did not give him the honor he maintained his due, he reached the point where he stabbed to death one of his own companions. Thereupon he turned apostate and fled to Naples where he committed other crimes and died an apostate in prison.

A great servant of God said wisely: "When we hear of the fall of certain Cedars of Lebanon — a Solomon, a Tertullian, a Hosius—whom everybody counted as saints, we may surmise that they had not given themselves entirely to God, but that they had cherished a secret pride which led to their downfall." How we should tremble then when we discover within ourselves a certain ambition to appear before the world and win its applause. If ever the world does applaud us, let us guard well against any vain complacency, for it could cause our ruin.

Let us particularly guard against touchiness on points of honor. St. Theresa says where there is that kind of touchiness there can be little love of God. There are many who profess to live a holy life, while in reality they are self idolaters. They exhibit certain external virtues, but they want to be praised for them. If nobody else praises them, they praise themselves. They want to have the reputation of being better than others; and if ever they are touched on this point, they lose their peace of mind, abstain from Communion, drop their practices of devotion and find no rest until they have regained their reputation for holiness. Not so the true lovers of God. Never do they say a word in their own praise, and the praise of others causes them, not satisfaction, but displeasure. They glory in contempt.

That saying of St. Francis of Assisi is only too true: "I am what I am in the sight of God." What does it profit us to stand high in the opinion of the world if before God we are vile and despicable? On the other hand what does it matter to be despised by the world if we are dear and pleasing in the eyes of God?

St. Augustine says: "A bad conscience is not healed by flattery nor a good conscience wounded by opprobrium." For he that praises us cannot take away the punishment we deserve for our evil deeds, neither can he that reviles us deprive us of the reward of our good works. "How can it hurt us," says St. Theresa, "to be blamed and despised by creatures,

if in Thy sight, O God, we are great and free from fault?"

THE saints desired only to be ignored and disregarded by everybody. St. Francis de Sales writes: "What wrong do they do us by having a bad opinion of us, since we ourselves should have a bad opinion of ourselves! Don't we know that we are bad? Then how can we pretend that others should think us good?"

How safe is a hidden life for those who would love the heart of Jesus Christ! Jesus Himself has given us the example of living hidden and despised for thirty years in a workshop. That is why the saints, in order to evade human praise, have gone to spend their lives in deserts and in caves. The desire to attract attention, says St. Vincent de Paul, to have others speak well of us, praise our way of acting, say that we succeed and work wonders, this, he says, is a fault which, making us forget God, vitiates our holiest actions and blocks all progress in the spiritual life.

Whoever therefore honestly desires to advance in the love of Jesus Christ must deal a determined deathblow to his vanity. But how? St. Mary Magdalen de Pazzi tells us how. Since, she says, the lifeblood of vanity is the good opinion of others, we deal a deathblow to vanity by remaining hidden and unknown by others. Whoever does not thus kill vanity will never be a true servant of God.

To be pleasing in the eyes of God we must guard against the desire of appearing before the world and gaining the esteem of men. And we must,

with still greater reason, guard against the desire of ruling over others. St. Theresa would have preferred that fire destroy the convent and every sister in it rather than see this accursed ambition for superiority enter it. It was her will that, if any sister would ever be found angling for the office of superior, that sister should be expelled from the community or at least confined to her cell for the rest of her life.

St. Mary Magdalen de Pazzi said: "For a holy person true honor consists in holding the lowest place and dreading to be preferred to anybody." The ambition therefore of one who loves God should be to outstrip everybody in humility, according to the admonition of St. Paul: "In humility let each esteem others better than himself." (Phil. 2:3) To sum up: whoever loves God, desires nothing but God.

Affections and Prayers

MY Jesus, give me the desire to please You and to forget all creatures, even myself. What does it profit me to be loved by all the world, if I am not loved by You, only love of my soul? My Jesus, Who came into this world to gain our hearts, if I do not know how to give You my heart, then take it by force,

fill it with Your love, and never permit it again to be separated from You. In the past I have turned my back on You, but now, seeing the evil I have done, I repent with my whole heart, and nothing pains me more than the remembrance of the many offenses I have committed against You. My consolation is in the knowledge that You are infinite goodness and that You do not disdain to love a sinner who loves You.

My cherished Redeemer, sweet love of my soul, in the past I have despised You, but now I love You more than myself. I offer You all that I have and all that I am. I have no other desire than to love You and to give You pleasure. This is my ambition. Accept it, and strengthen it, and extinguish in me all desires for mundane things. You are exceedingly worthy of love, and You have gone to such extreme lengths to win my love.

See me here before You; I want to be all Yours, and I want to suffer whatever You will, for You have died in suffering on the cross for love of me. You want me to be a saint; You are able to make me a saint; I trust in You.


I trust also in you, Mary, O great mother of God.

NOT COUNTING THE COST

O dearly beloved Word of God, teach me to be generous, to serve Thee as Thou dost deserve, to give without counting the cost, to fight without fretting at my wounds, to labor without seeking repose, to be prodigal of myself without looking for any other reward save that of knowing that I do Thy holy will.

Cardinal Merry del Val

BOOKS



THOMAS TOBIN, C.S.S.R.

We recommend that books listed or reviewed in THE LIGUORIAN be purchased at your local bookstore. If you cannot obtain the book in that way, you may write to THE LIGUORIAN for further information.

Stop Pushing!

Dan Herr

As a willing student of Dan Herr's rules for book reviewers I approach his collection of essays on many topics, making use of his own suggestions.

Rule: "Books with prefaces are to be preferred — there's always so much quotable material in them. Saves you racking your brain." (page 144)

Application I: "You are about to confront yourself with the writing of Dan Herr. To the uninitiated this can prove as much of a shock as making a basic mistake with shower faucets . . ." (Preface, page 7)

Application II: ". . . Mr. Herr is a certified, card-carrying iconoclast — one of the few still operating above ground." (Preface, page 8)

Rule: "All good books are 'stimulating,' 'provocative,' 'exciting,' or 'readable.' A favorable review which does not contain at least one of these words will never get past an on-the-ball editor." (pages 144-5)

Application: Dan Herr is "stimulating," "provocative," and "exciting" to the point that you want to throw something either extra hard or extra soft at him. He is "readable" preferably on a bus, since you would not allow any person to talk to you in that way in your home.—T. E. T., C.S.S.R.

(Hanover House, \$3.50)

The Third Revolution

Karl Stern

Dr. Karl Stern, a practicing psychiatrist and a convert to Catholicism, is well qualified to write on the relation between psychiatry and religion. **The Third Revolution** is a scholarly book for the serious reader who will learn a great deal about a better relationship between the science of the mind and the science of the soul.—T. E. T., C.S.S.R.

(Image Books, \$.75)

Revolution and Papacy

E. E. Y. Hales

The first half of the nineteenth century represents in many ways a difficult period for the Catholic historian. This was the era of revolutions, when monarchs were toppling from their thrones, and the old order, with its accent on privilege and wealth and station, was rapidly giving way to the new. Mr. Hales handles in masterful fashion the problems and contradictions of these trying times. Indeed, he has made himself a specialist of the era, as witness his previous works: *Pio Nono* and *The Catholic Church in the Modern World*. These three books are well worth the attention of the serious reader. They combine profound scholarship with grace and felicity of style, a combination, it may be remarked, which is not too often encountered. **Revolution and Papacy** deals specifically with the popes and their reaction to the fast rising liberal elements of the day. The author is not afraid to conclude that papal decisions touching on temporal affairs were sometimes unwise; by this time surely no one can be surprised to find that the Church has a human side. Nevertheless one emerges from this study with new admiration for the ways of divine providence in guiding the Church through trying times to her present position of esteem by rich and poor alike.—L.G.M., C.S.S.R. (Doubleday and Co., \$4.50)

A Priest Confesses

Jose Luis Martin Descallo

Rita Goldberg, translator

A young Spanish priest came to the attention of the English reading world when his novel, *God's Frontier*, appeared. He won wide acclaim for the intense and bleak mood that is so characteristic of his nation. Now his second book, **A Priest Confesses**, gives us a glimpse of the thoughts of the author during the last year of his seminary life and during the first months of his priesthood. He reveals himself as a very human person preparing to come into intimate contact with the divine in the priesthood. He has his moments of doubt, of indecision, of attraction to marriage and children, but willingly sacrifices all for the sake of his greater gift of himself in his chosen vocation. Lay persons will discover in this book a better understanding of the inner life of a priest. Seminarians will find many of their own thoughts and emotions echoed by the talented pen of the author; priests will be inspired by the recall of many happy memories and high resolves of their early years in the priesthood. Excellent and of value for all.—W.W., C.S.S.R.

(Academy Guild Press, \$3.95)

Sources of Christian Theology: Vol. II, Sacraments and Forgiveness

Rev. Paul F. Palmer, S.J., S.T.D., Editor

The reverend editor of this excellent book justly merits praise and gratitude for his work. In this volume he has gathered and arranged in both a topical and a chronological order a series of documents and excerpts relative to the sacraments of penance and extreme unction and also indulgences. Beginning with the New Testament, he continues through the writings of early fathers, the works of medieval scholars, decrees of the Councils, even down to our days when he cites the encyclical of Pius XII on the Mystical Body. He not only quotes his sources but frequently prefaces them with his own brief and judicious commentaries. Father Palmer cites not only Catholic sources but also orthodox and even non-Catholic works. He concludes his labors with a valuable "Summary and Appraisal." A twofold index of topics and names completes the book. We commend this volume to the earnest reading of all who are interested in the history of Christian theology. Did I tell you that all the sources quoted are given in English?—M.S.B., C.S.S.R.

(The Newman Press, \$6.00)

Readings in Church History, Vol. I

Colman J. Barry, O.S.B., editor

For a period of six years Father Colman J. Barry, professor of history at St. John's University in Collegeville, gathered the material for this comprehensive work. It is a collection of primary sources for the study of church history. Unlike many collections it does not consist merely of fragmentary quotations but extended excerpts from the basic documents necessary for an understanding of the history of the Catholic Church. This work is a must book for teacher and student, but also a very valuable and interesting book for all. This reviewer enjoyed paging through and coming in contact with the actual writings of the famous people who played an important role in the story of the Catholic Church. Vol. I consists of 633 double column pages and deals with the period from Pentecost to the Protestant revolt. —T.E.T., C.S.S.R.

(Newman Press, \$7.50)

Here I Am, Lord

G. Vauthier

Some of the psalms adapted in verse for children with charming colored sketches. Delightful.

(Newman Press, \$3.00)

Stage of Fools

A fine novel about St. Thomas More by a capable novelist.
(Image Books, \$.95)

Charles A. Brady

BEST SELLERS

A Moral Evaluation of Current Books, Published at the University of Scranton, Pa.

MOST POPULAR

(Not necessarily approved. Roman numeral indicates a moral rating according to categories used in general list.)

Hawaii (IIb)—*Michener*
Advise and Consent (IIb)—*Drury*
To Kill a Mocking Bird (IIa)—*Lee*
The Last of the Just (IIa)—*Schwarz-Bart*
Sermons and Soda-water (IIb)—*O'Hara*
The Dean's Watch (I)—*Goudge*
The Chess Players (I)—*Keyes*
Decision at Delphi (I)—*MacInnes*
The Listener (IIa)—*Caldwell*
The Lovely Ambition (IIa)—*Chase*
Pomp and Circumstances (IIb)—*Coward*
The Light in the Piazza (IIa)—*Spencer*
The Nylon Pirates (IV)—*Montserrat*

I. Suitable for general reading:

The Case of the Sapphire Brooch—*Bush*
The Man from Nowhere—*Fleming*
The Life and Times of Tarquin the Etruscan—*Franzoso*
Excellence—*Gardner*
The Church in Crisis—*Hughes*
The Angel of Death—*Lorraine*
La vie Anglaise—*Mayer*
Ring of Bright Water—*Maxwell*

The Coil of Life—*Moore*
A Life of Shakespeare—*Pearson*
Some Must Watch—*Ransome*
I Walked With Heroes—*Romulo*
Call the Witness—*Sherry*
In Fear of Silence—*Slimming*
The Ice in the Bedroom—*Wodehouse*
The Gentle Legions—*Carter*
In Place of Folly—*Cousins*
The Great Swindle—*Cowles*
Skyline—*Fowler*
And I Shall Be Healed—*Fulda*
Fate Is the Hunter—*Gann*
Winnie Ille Pu—*Lenard*
The War in the Far West: 1861-1865—*Lewis*
The Iron Brigade—*Nolan*
Send a Gunboat—*Reeman*
Ready Revenge—*Arley*
Garbo: A Biography—*Billquist*
The Man from Mount Vernon—*Boyce*
The Case of the Twisted Scarf—*Durbridge*
Bedlam in the Back Seat—*Gillespie*
The De Gaulle Nobody Knows—*Hatch*
Mark of Treachery—*Kelland*
The Fight for the Sea—*Lewis*
George III—*Long*
A History of the Cold War—*Lukacs*
Out of the Air—*McBride*
The Queen's Necklace—*Mossiker*
Summer of Pride—*Savage*

Thomas Wolfe and His Family—
Wheaton & Blythe
 Look to the Wilderness—*Burden*
 Apostle in a Top Hat—*Derum*
 My Wilderness—*Douglas*
 The Far Sands—*Garve*
 The Steps to Murder—*King*
 Lincoln for the Ages—*Newman*
 Where There's a Will—*Peters*
 The World of Carnegie Hall—
Schickel
 Saigon Journey—*Stafford*
 St. Francis de Sales: Selected Letters
 —*Stopp*

II. Suitable only for adults:

A. Because of advanced style and contents:

The Happy Lagoons—*Anderson-
 Rosendal, Jorgen*
 The Lost Pharaohs—*Cottrell*
 First Family—*Davis*
 Mid-Century—*Dos Passos*
 A Case for Appeal—*Egan*
 It's Murder, Mr. Potter—*Foley*
 A Burnt-Out Case—*Greene*
 Ra'ivavae—*Marshall*
 Manila Galleon—*Mason*
 Tibet Is My Country—*Norbu &
 Harrer*
 The Deadly Friend—*Pentecost*
 The Fifteen Wonders of the World
 —*Poirier*
 The General—*Sillitoe*
 Seven Years Dead—*Truss*
 That Night It Rained—*Waugh*
 Return of the Tiger—*Connell*
 Betrayal at the UN—*Copp & Peck*
 Through the Fields of Clover—
De Vries
 Green Henry—*Keller*
 Memoires Interieurs—*Mauriac*
 Dear Ones All—*Rikhoff*
 The Light and the Dark—*Snow*
 Time of Hope—*Snow*
 Apprentice to Fear—*Brinton*
 The Late Unlamented—*Carmichael*

The Wax Foundation—*Davenport*
 Envy the Frightened—*Dayan*
 Operation Terror—*Gordons*
 Six Black Camels—*Lanham*

B. Because of immoral incidents which do not, however, invalidate the book as a whole:

Twilight World—*Anderson*
 Peter Freuchen's Adventures in the
 Arctic—*Freuchen* (ed.)
 Twenty Plus Two—*Gruber*
 Oscar Mooney's Head—*Huntsberry*
 Knife Edge—*MacKenzie*
 A Gay and Melancholy Sound—
Miller
 Unvexed to the Sea—*Morrison*
 A Lover for Estelle—*Rooke*
 If Thine Eye Offend Thee—
Schirmbeck
 Harvest on the Don—*Sholokhov*
 Epidemic—*Slaughter*
 Paths of Love—*Vercors*
 A Dynasty of Western Outlaws—
Wellman
 My Hero—*Carson*
 A Stranger Passed—*Christian*
 Scenes from Life—*Cooper*
 The She-Wolf of France—*Druon*
 The Road Through the Woods—
Frankau
 Man's Desiring—*Gallie*
 The 'Mozart' Leaves at Nine—
Greene
 Stowaway—*Hall*

III. Permissible for the discriminating adult:

Resistance, Rebellion, and Death—
Camus
 Journey Not to End—*Herr*
 The Plot—*Hostovsky*
 Mountains Ahead—*McKeown*
 The Bachelors—*Spark*

IV. Not recommended to any reader:

A Winter's Tale—*Godden*
 The Key—*Takazaki*

LUCID INTERVALS

Customer: This restaurant must have a remarkably clean kitchen.

Manager (beaming): Thank you, sir! It's nice of you to say so. But tell me, how did you know?

Customer: Everything tastes of soap.

Here is how a boy told the Bible story of Eliseus and the bear.

"The boys called Eliseus a baldhead, and he said if they did it again he would call a bear out of the woods and it would eat them up. So they did, and he did, and it did."

PARISH PLEASANTRIES



PILLARS OF THE CHURCH

"Would you mind telling me what you think of my abilities as shown by my impersonations of you?" asked the mimic of the distinguished actor.

"Well," said the actor cheerfully, "one of us is pretty awful."

The grocer leaned over the counter and yelled at a boy who stood close to the apple barrel: "Are you trying to steal some apples, boy?"

"No, sir!" the boy said timidly. "I'm trying not to."

Little boy: Mother says she could have soled her shoes with that steak.

Butcher (sarcastically): Well, why didn't she?

Little boy: She couldn't get the nails through.

Catechist: What is the outward and visible sign of baptism?

Johnnie: The baby.

Poet (as he looks out over the water): My heart is in the ocean.

Seasick friend: (as he grips the railing tighter): You've gone me one better.

FILE 13

In a few years these trying times will be the good old days.

Nobody is perfect except the man your wife could have married.

The reason why there are more car accidents than train wrecks is that the fireman never hugs the engineer.

ON ASKING FAVORS

Much can be learned about an individual's character merely by studying the kind of favors he asks from others. There are, of course, two extremes in this matter. Some people never ask favors of others, even their best friends, because they are proud and independent. That is one kind of weakness. But the weakness of character being pointed out here is that manifested by the opposite extreme, that is, by the asking of unreasonable favors. There are persons who think that friendship or relationship should make slaves of their friends and relations, and who prove their selfishness by asking and even demanding things beyond reason. Here are some examples of this weakness:

1. Weak and selfish people are everlastingly asking friends to do things for them that they could easily do themselves. The sole reason for making the request is their own sloth and laziness. They will ask their friends to do their shopping, to write their letters, to do their chores, etc. Sometimes they will ask such favors even when the friend will be gravely inconvenienced to grant them, while they themselves have little or nothing to do.

2. Weak and selfish people often ask favors of others such as they themselves would never for a moment nor under the gravest urgency consider doing for someone else. Thus amongst almost every group of employes there will be found one who frequently asks others to substitute for him (for example, that he may go fishing), but who is always too busy or dated up or unwell to substitute for someone else. Thus there are those who often give their friends the "privilege" of lending money to them, but who are always just "broke" or in straitened circumstances, when a friend asks to borrow a little from them.

3. It is also a sign of weakness when an individual asks another who is in a position of authority, on the plea of friendship or some other bond, to make an exception for him that would offend against justice and upset all order and rule. To ask a superior for favors that he cannot grant to one's equals, to invoke friendship for the purpose of inducing a holder of judicial, political, industrial or even fraternal authority to grant something contrary to distributive justice, would be to manifest great unreasonableness and pride.

(This is a chapter from the booklet, HOW TO IMPROVE YOUR DISPOSITION. A copy of the booklet may be obtained by sending twenty-five cents to LIGUORIAN PAMPHLETS, Liguori, Missouri. Write to the same address for a complete list of our pamphlets.)

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